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LONDON NEWS

CHRISTMAS NUMBER 1991



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Christmas, 1991
Volume 279 No 7103

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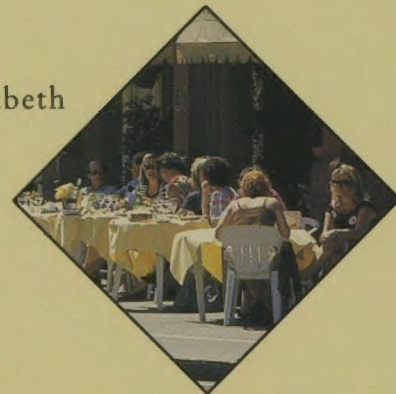


The Resident Manager.

Chelsea has preserved a village atmosphere with its shops, parks and churches, and is still host to events such as the Chelsea Flower Show. Nearby are many of London's finest attractions, the Museums of Kensington, the Albert Hall, Harrods, the King's Road and even the Oval.

aspects of Elizabeth Court.

The apartments are designed to maximise space and light, with many of them overlooking the beautiful



The pavement cafes of Chelsea.

central garden. The residents' drawing room is a popular meeting place and other amenities include a guest suite, laundry room and car parking. Elizabeth Court offers the peace and quiet of luxury apartments set

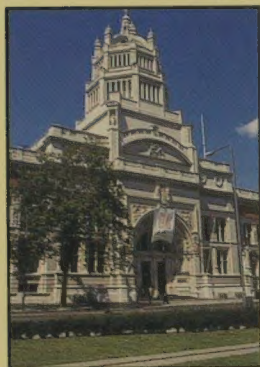


The video entry system.



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The Victoria and Albert Museum.

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A typical private drawing room

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NELSON'S COLUMN

LONDON BEFORE THE FIRE

THE MUSEUM OF LONDON



This fine view of London from Southwark, painted before the Great Fire of 1666, has been acquired by the Museum of London, and they are rightly pleased to have it. Only two paintings showing London before the fire are known to have survived. One is in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire, the other belonged to the borough of Tower Hamlets, but as they lacked the facilities to look after it and display it they have sold it (by private treaty after first asking Sotheby's to put it to auction) to the museum, where it will go on display on November 12.

Topographical oil paintings are rare, and the artist of this one is unknown though he is thought to be Dutch. It appears to be closely related to an engraved panorama by Clement de Jongh, dated about 1640, and also shares many similarities with engraved views by Claes Jansz Visscher in 1616 and Matthaeus Merian in 1638, both of which were widely copied and circulated here and in the Netherlands, and which themselves derive in style from the prototype of the genre, drawn by Anthonis van den Wyngaerde in about 1550. The artist of the museum's painting copies the mistaken course of the Thames beyond the Tower, which originated in Visscher's engraving, and shares the tendency of both Visscher and Merian to bulge the four tops of the Tower and to round the pointed arches of London Bridge.

Topographically the painting does

not show anything new, but its use of oil and colour gives a much more vivid impression of the old City, dominated of course by St Paul's Cathedral, which is without its wooden steeple, burnt down in 1561. On the extreme left of the painting is Whitehall, with a cluster of grand houses leading up to the Strand and the Temple, where Middle Temple Hall can be recognised, with the riverside gardens in front. King Henry VIII's Palace of Brideswell and Baynards Castle are the next major landmarks and, under the tower of Old St Paul's, on the river bank, are the cranes of Three Cranes Wharf. The battlemented structure just before the bridge is the medieval Fishmongers' Hall, which was burnt down in the fire. On the right of the painting is the Tower.

The rotting impaled heads of traitors on the great gateway to Old London Bridge contrast with the ornate Nonsuch House, built entirely of wood, on the bridge itself, and with the chapel in the middle dedicated to St Thomas à Becket. At this time the river could be crossed by boat at Swan Stairs as well as by the bridge.

On the south side of the river, just to the left of the bridge, is the medieval structure of the parish church of St Saviour with, to its left, the Great Hall of the medieval palace of the Bishop of Winchester, whose rose-window is still to be seen in Clink Street. But entertainment was the south bank's main interest, and all four of the well-known

theatres are clearly visible—from left to right, the Swan, Hope, Rose and Globe.

Acknowledging that the museum's new painting is copied after a copy after a copy, Mireille Galinou, who is Curator of Paintings, Prints and Drawings, is nonetheless delighted to have acquired it. "Quite simply, the tones and textures of the medium of oil flesh out the dry topographical information of the prints and drawings," she says. "They create an immediate rapport with the spectator, and this is of course of crucial interest to a museum dedicated to interpreting London to the public at large in the most immediate and legible way possible."

The museum painting and that owned by the Duke of Devonshire are closely related and probably copied from each other or from the same model. The Duke has agreed to co-operate with the museum in a detailed research programme, allowing his painting to be submitted to a thorough scientific investigation with a view to increasing the understanding of the origins of city and landscape painting in this country.

The painting cost the museum £170,000, plus an undisclosed amount to be paid to Sotheby's following its withdrawal from their sale of British paintings in July. The museum has raised about half of the required sum, but needs additional funds if it is not to overload its purchase grant.

A rare view of London, the last painted record of the whole of the city before it was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666.

NELSON'S COLUMN

A FAN OF THE PAST

Mrs Hélène Alexander whose lifelong love of fans has led her to open the world's first museum devoted to these beautiful fashion accessories.



JULIAN CALDER

When Hélène Alexander was four years old she saw her grandmother—then lady-in-waiting to the aunt of the Egyptian king, Farouk—descending a staircase in full fig, decked with diamonds and pearls and, magnificently, carrying a fan. “I think I was stage-struck,” says Mrs Alexander. The fan in particular must have made a considerable impression, for she went on to study fans, collect them, become an authority on their history and manufacture and, a few months ago, to open a museum claimed to be the first devoted exclusively to fans.

Mrs Alexander's Fan Museum, located in a pair of 280-year-old houses in Greenwich, close to the town centre and the National Maritime Museum, is more than just a display of beautiful fans. “It's a study collection,” she says. “There have been some very fine collections—for instance Lady Charlotte Schreiber's in the British Museum—but they haven't really gone to the heart of the matter. Ours includes not just fans but fan-leaves, *montures* (their mountings) and duplicates, so that one can really start to see different schools of fan-making and fan-painting.”

The museum's Orientation Room houses a small but carefully chosen permanent display covering the history of fan-making, changing styles and the many different materials used. These have included ivory, lace, mother-of-pearl, silk, paper, bamboo, straw, fur, feathers and even glass. It explains the fan's role as fashion accessory, ceremonial object and practical item; its manufacture, and its gradual spread from the Far East, first to Italy, then to France and later to

other European countries including England.

The fan's heyday in Europe was in the 18th century. “They were brought over by people who had done the Grand Tour,” explains Mrs Alexander. “The English often imported fan-leaves, which they called fan-papers, in large numbers. They didn't mount them until they got home, because, unlike complete fans, they weren't subject to customs duty.”

Contemporary sources confirm the importance of fans at this time. “Women are armed with fans as men are with swords,” wrote Addison in *The Spectator* in 1711. Nearly 50 years later the *Grand Magazine* of London proclaimed: “It [the fan] exercises the office of zephyrs, and cools the glowing breast. It saves the blush of modesty by showing all we wish to see, yet hiding all that we wish to conceal.”

The collecting urge is inborn in Hélène Alexander. Her father, Victor Adda, was a notable collector of coins, and a family trust set up in his memory has provided funds to make the Fan Museum possible. Its logo combines two Egyptian fans with a rare silver coin bearing the image of Cleopatra VII, whom Shakespeare describes at the start of *Antony and Cleopatra* with “eunuchs fanning her”.

Mrs Alexander started collecting when she was 18, and latterly worked for 13 years at the Victoria & Albert Museum. “About five or six years ago I realised that my collection was rather big and was beginning to take over. So I began to plan for its future. I wanted it to be kept intact, and I wanted to share knowledge and beauty with

other people and to bring something extra to the world of art.”

She began to search for a suitable showcase. It had to be of an appropriate period and style for the collection but “not too grand. Anybody can go and see a stately home of that period, but there's very little domestic architecture open to the public.” She settled on two early-18th-century houses at the foot of Greenwich's historic Crooms Hill. They were built at the peak of fan fashion in England and had—potentially—the right ambience. But first, some problems had to be overcome: “... leaking roof, dry rot, wet rot, longhorn beetle and the back walls falling out.”

With architects Leslie Ginsberg and John Griffiths, and her husband Dicky acting as project director, she set about restoring and converting the two buildings, then decorating and furnishing the rooms appropriately, in many cases with furniture inherited from her mother. The result is charming and intimate, as if one were looking at a private collection in a friend's own house. The garden has been recreated in Japanese style, and there is a French-style, fan-shaped parterre and a neo-Georgian orangery.

Behind the ambience is a thorough-going professionalism devoted to preserving the exhibits. Ultra-violet filter glass in windows and display cabinets, cold fibre-optic lighting and humidity monitoring ensure that items on show suffer minimum deterioration. When taken off display, they are carefully stored in darkness for six or seven years to “let them rest”.

The current exhibition, *Fans of the Four Seasons*, is of fans and related material from Japan and will run until January 15. Associated events include a tea ceremony and demonstrations of Japanese flower arranging. Japanese visitors may not recognise some of the fans as coming from their country, because they were made in Chinese style exclusively for export to Europe.

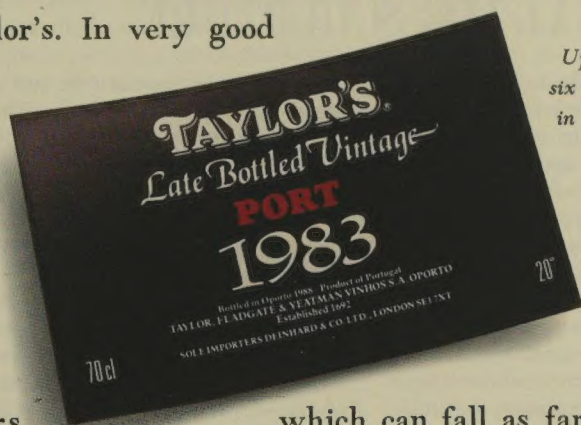
The 20th-century life-style caused the virtual disappearance of fans in the West, says Mrs Alexander. “You couldn't jump on a bus holding a fan, or use one at a cocktail party when you had a glass in one hand and a cigarette in the other.” Will fans ever have a renaissance here? “With the demise of the cigarette, who knows?”

□ The Fan Museum, 12 Crooms Hill, London SE10 (081-858 7879). Tuesday to Saturday 11am-4.30pm, Sunday noon-4.30pm. Admission £2.50; concessions £1.50; OAPs and disabled free Tuesday after 2pm.

TONY ALDOUS

HOW A TAYLOR'S PORT GROWS UP DEPENDS ON WHEN IT HITS THE BOTTLE

Rather like babies, all Taylor's ports look much alike to begin with. Deep red, almost purple wines cradled in wooden casks in the cool, dark, silent lodges along the banks of Portugal's Douro river. How they develop from then onwards is very much a matter of how they are treated by Taylor's. In very good



*Up to
six years
in cask*

years, which can fall as far as eight years apart, Taylor's will pronounce some of the wine good enough to become Vintage Port, in which case it is bottled as a mere toddler after just two years in the cask.

Once in the bottle, the ageing process slows almost to a standstill, giving the young wine at least a decade (and often several) to grow into that subtlest of pleasures, a perfectly matured vintage port.

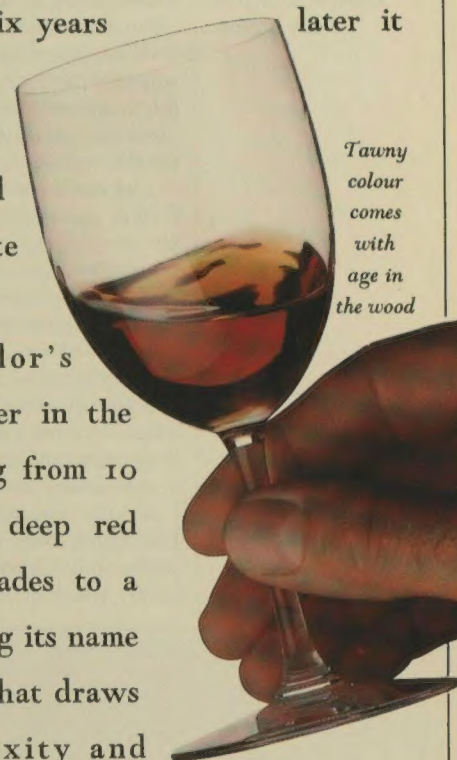
If the wine is allowed to remain in cask, where maturity comes rather more swiftly, then

between four and six years can become a Late Bottled Vintage, a fully rounded port for immediate enjoyment.

But if Taylor's leave it even longer in the wood, for anything from 10 to 40 years, the deep red colour gradually fades to a gentle tawny, giving its name to a style of port that draws immense complexity and character from its long sojourn in the cask.

At the end of the day, or even at the end of the dinner, one's choice of port like one's choice of companions is a matter of individual taste.

Taylor's would merely point out that any port which bears their name will at least have been impeccably well brought up.



*Tawny
colour
comes
with
age in
the wood*



Vintage ages slowly in the bottle

TAYLORS · THE GREAT FAMILY OF PORT

NELSON'S COLUMN HISTORY IN MIDDLE ENGLISH

A facsimile edition of a rare 15th-century manuscript of an early chronicle of England has been produced in a limited edition with translation from Middle English.

Sometime in the mid-14th century, during the reign of King Edward III, an unknown scribe settled down to translate into Middle English the text of a chronicle of English history, written in French and known as the *Brut*, thought to have been composed around 1300. At that time French was still the current language for administrative and literary purposes, but there was growing demand for written English, a demand which Chaucer recognised and to which the translator of the *Brut* was also no doubt responding.

The English version was an instant success and copies circulated widely all over the country. In 1480 it was printed by Caxton as *The Chronicles of England*. One of the manuscript copies, dating from the mid-15th century, is now part of a collection of early and rare books owned by Lord Harlech and known as the Brogynton Manuscript 8, after the family estate of Brogynton (anglicised as Porkington), near Oswestry, in Shropshire.

A local publisher, known as the Porkington Press, has produced a facsimile of the Middle English manuscript, which it is putting out in a

limited edition with a transcription of the text in readable form and a modern translation. The translator is Rosalynn Voaden, from the Centre for Medieval Studies at York University. In her introduction she describes the *Brut* chronicle as the nearest thing we have to an "official" history of that time.

Much of its fascination lies in the unfolding of the Arthurian legend,

including a version of the prophecies of Merlin which became hugely popular in the Middle Ages, perhaps because they were vague enough to be capable of interpretation in any number of ways, and thus of great use to medieval politicians.

Details of the publication of the facsimile and translation will be found on page 43.

AN APPEAL FOR SCULPTURE

Sculpture is a lonely art. Those who practise it spend long hours hacking or welding away in their studios, usually on some intractable material, for, as Dr Johnson once said, we would not value even the finest head cut upon a carrot. The news that a band of British sculptors has launched an appeal thus comes as something of a surprise. We did not know they were so well organised. The appeal is for £1 million and has been launched by the Royal Society of British Sculptors to stimulate new interest in their art.

The President of the Society is Philomena Davis, a figurative sculptor who

works mainly in bronze (she has a foundry in Milton Keynes). The Society wants to create what she calls "an international centre of excellence" at its headquarters at 108 Old Brompton Road in London, a charming house left to the Society by its founder, Cecil Thomas, whose stone figure of a fawn still stands on the site. With galleries, a library, master classes, new awards and prizes the Society hopes to put sculpture in the minds of architects, developers and other potential patrons who can help, in Philomena Davis's words, make Britain "the worldwide centre for sculpture".

SPREADING THE WORDS

The Oxford English Dictionary is one of the wonders of the modern world. When the granddaughter of James Murray, the great Scottish lexicographer who edited the first edition and established its authority, wrote his biography she chose the title *Caught in the Web of Words*, and the book's publisher, the Oxford University Press, must feel now that the phrase applies equally accurately to it.

The *OED*, published initially in instalments between 1884 and 1928, has proved to be a never-ending work. The first edition of 10 volumes was reissued as 12; together with a supplement, in 1933. It was expanded by a four-volume supplement between 1972 and 1986, and then replaced by a 20-volume second edition published in 1989. This edition, which cost £1,650, has now been produced in its entirety in one volume, priced at £150, which makes it not only the bargain of the century but also a remarkable contribution to the spread and defence of civilisation.

The Compact edition tips the scales at 12lb, which makes it a hefty volume but not so obese as to induce a hernia.

It is in fact quite pleasant to handle, being rather handsomely and solidly bound and presented in a slipcase complete with magnifying glass and instruction booklet, or *User's Guide*.

The glass is essential because the typeface of the 20-volume dictionary has been reduced micrographically so that nine pages of the original can be printed on one page of the Compact, reducing 21,728 pages to 2,386 without cutting any of its 59 million words.

The *User's Guide* is also valuable, particularly for the new readers that this edition will attract. The *OED* contains a wealth of information that may not be instantly accessible. In the beginning, of course, is the headword. There are 290,500 of these, and they run alphabetically from A to zyxt, each supported by guides to pronunciation, parts of speech, variant forms, etymology, including derivation, language forms and references. Finally come the definitions, accompanied by one of the acknowledged glories of the *OED*, the quotations that illustrate how a word is used.

There are even quotations for the longest word in the book, but about

this the dictionary is untypically stern. The word is pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis, which it defines as a "factitious word alleged to mean 'a lung disease caused by the inhalation of very fine silica dust' but occurring chiefly as an instance of a very long word". Such barbs are unusual, for the *OED* takes pride on being descriptive, not prescriptive. "It records," says the *User's Guide* firmly, "non-judgmentally, the history of the language as mirrored in the written words of a democratic mix of novelists, playwrights, journalists, scholars, scientists, legislators, politicians, diarists, saints and philosophers."

It must have been fun compiling that little list, not to mention its omissions, just as it is fun to plunge into this colossal book and be ambushed by some unknown word or variation at the turn of every page or, in the case of the Compact edition, of every nine pages. This is a book all literate people will want to give themselves for Christmas, if they cannot persuade anyone else to give it to them. And the OUP should be given a Nobel prize, or something better.

The new 20-volume edition of the Oxford English Dictionary is now available, thanks to the magic of micrography, in one compact volume.

Ah to be in India, now that autumn's here.

Camels pick their way across
the placid reaches of the river Yamuna.

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the pellucid light of early dawn.

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and even three centuries ago.

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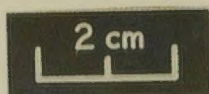
I am longing to read your free 32 page full colour brochure on every aspect of holidaying in India.

Name _____

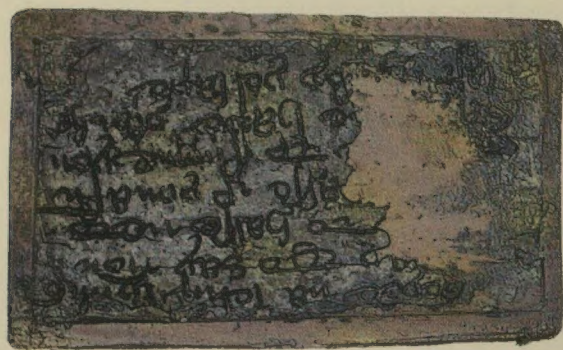
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INDIAhhhh

NELSON'S COLUMN YORK'S MEDIEVAL FILOFAX



Right, the tablets in the leather case, in unrestored condition. The front of tablet 2 contains part of a poem, below.



Medieval archaeologists have made an exciting and unusual discovery in the heart of the walled city of York—a set of eight waxed writing tablets in a leather case. The find is unusual because objects of this nature are not normally preserved in British soil conditions, and exciting because the writing that is decipherable appears to include a love poem.

The tablets were found during excavations sponsored by General Accident at Swinegate, only a few hundred yards from the Minster, within a layer of 14th-century pottery in an area of backyards used in medieval times for cultivation, the dumping of domestic rubbish and for cesspits. They were almost perfectly preserved because of the waterlogging of the surrounding soil. Once lifted, they were taken to the conservation laboratory, where it was established that they were made of boxwood, each only 50mm by 30mm and in total forming a stack 15mm thick: about the size of a standard matchbox, but rather thicker, each tablet being between 1mm and 2mm thick. They were partially enclosed in the remains of a leather case made of a strip of calfskin about 40mm wide with a seam at one corner. There was no

base, and the front and back were decorated with a finely-drawn leaf pattern against a hatched background.

Two of the tablets had separated, which enabled the conservators to see that their surfaces were recessed, and that the recess was filled with writing—writing that was being seen for the first time in 500 years. The remaining tablets were firmly stuck together and had to be prised apart by delicately inserting a thin sheet of Melinex between each pair. Melinex is a thin, strong, clear plastic film that is virtually friction-free when wet. The process required nerves of steel, but eventually all the tablets were separated and it was revealed that three different documents were distributed among the 14 waxed faces.

Work on the script and text was undertaken by Dr Michelle Brown at the British Library. She found it to be of a type dating from the 14th century, the spelling suggesting a northern origin. The spelling “scho” for “she”, for example, is typically northern, and there seems little doubt that the tablets were used, if not made, in York.

The first document, which runs from the front face of tablet 2 to the front face of tablet 5, has six lines of writing on each tablet. The text is Middle English, very difficult to read, but the repetition of the phrase “scho sayd me noht not nay” (“she said to me nothing not no”) suggests it is a love poem. Its best-preserved part is on the front of tablet 2, on which 80 per cent survives:

T—scho sayd me [noht]
not nay my way wille
—ne—wend t—ha
(wr)est my will holy
halle a(nd)—s a(nd) wit he
playd my ffile ya schno
(an)d stille seyde scho

The text is still difficult to translate into modern English, but the first two lines probably read: “Though she said nothing to me not no, my way will go . . .” The final two and a half lines, continuing on the rear face of tablet 2, read “He played until I was satisfied and still she said nothing not no.”

The rest of the poem is much less well preserved. So far it has not been identified elsewhere, and it is probably a completely new work dating precisely from the age of Geoffrey Chaucer, who lived c1342-1400.

On the remaining tablets are what appear to be accounts and the draft of a letter, in Latin, about some legal matter. Attached to the back of tablet 8 was a mysterious concretion which, after X-radiography and physical

examination, seems to have been the remains of an iron stylus used to make the writing. Originally it was about 35mm long and 2.5-3mm in diameter, flattened at one end and tapering to a point at the other. The point was used to make the writing, the flattened end to erase it.

As the laboratory work draws to a close it is possible now to reconstruct the original appearance of the tablets with some certainty. They were placed in a leather case. The surviving strip of leather wrapped round the eight tablets represented the body of the case, and stitch holes around the lower edge suggest that there was originally a base which was lost or destroyed during burial. There was also probably a lid, and a cord fixed to the sides so that the tablets could be worn round the neck or hung from a belt. The tablets themselves probably had green-coloured wax, against which the writing would show well (analysis detected copper salts mixed with the beeswax that formed the writing surface).

The owner must have been fairly well off—such objects, the smallest and finest tablets ever found in Europe, would have been quite expensive—and he or she was literate in both English and Latin. Education at that time was confined to the upper and middle classes and the clergy. Perhaps the owner was one of the minor officials mentioned in the draft letter, for York was a major ecclesiastical centre and a focus of royal administration. But the misspelling of certain words in Latin, such as *necessitass* for *necessitas*, suggests that the tablets were not the property of a notary.

Evidently the tablets served for keeping notes, a sort of 14th-century Filofax. As such they were quite common, though relatively few—no more than 150 or so—have survived. Waxed tablets were used throughout medieval Europe for every sort of note-taking, though most were much larger than those found in York and were employed for jotting down accounts. They remained in general use until paper became cheap and abundant. In England examples are known only from Southampton, Cambridge, London and Battle Abbey.

The most pressing problem that remains for the York tablets is that of conserving them without losing the writing or separating the wax from the wood. The process of conservation is just about to begin. When it is finished, in perhaps two or three months' time, this unique discovery will at last be able to go on public view.

DOMINIC TWEDDLE

DOMINIC TWEDDLE



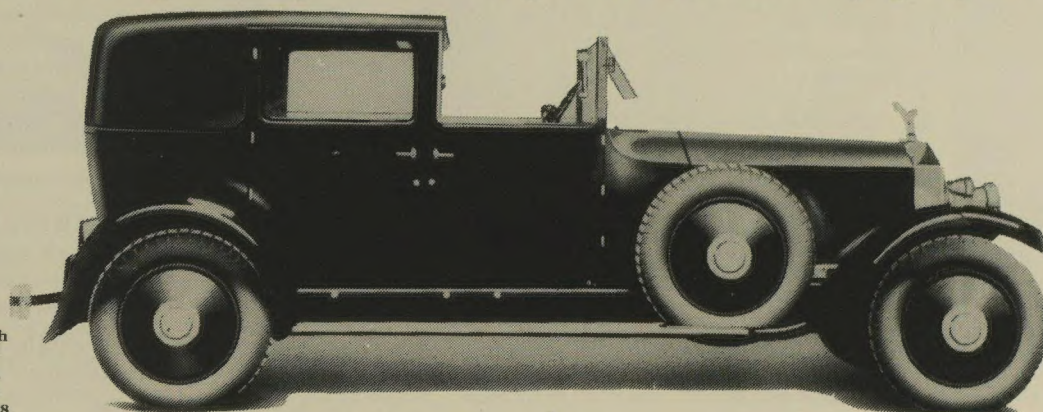
BY APPOINTMENT TO
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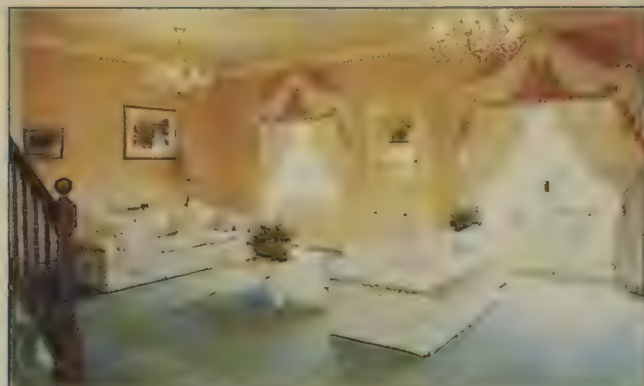
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NELSON'S COLUMN

THE ROYAL COLLECTORS

The National Gallery has followed up its triumphant opening of the Sainsbury Wing with an equally winning first temporary exhibition which runs until January 19. The 96 paintings on show are, of course, of the highest interest and quality belonging, as they do, to the Queen, whose private collection is the largest in the world. Called *The Queen's Pictures: Royal Collectors through the Centuries*, the exhibition covers more than 300 years of active collecting from the foundations laid by King Henry VIII to the substantial acquisitions made by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

And here lies the exhibition's main fascination, for as well as seeing some of the finest of the Queen's pictures we are also able to learn how the collection was assembled. The pictures are presented not in the order in which they were painted, but as they were collected. Contemporary purchases mingle with Old Masters, and some of these happy contrasts become most marked in the galleries showing the acquisitions of Queen Victoria's time. Both the queen and her husband were eager collectors, Prince Albert being one of the first in Britain to buy early Italian paintings, including the fine triptych by Duccio which is on display here. The queen and the prince took an equally keen interest in painters of their own day.

The queen, in particular, was an admirer of Landseer, sharing his fascination with animals. In 1839 she had been captivated by the performances of the American lion-tamer Isaac van Amburgh, visiting his displays at the



Landseer's painting of the lion-tamer Isaac van Amburgh and his animals, bought by Queen Victoria.

Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, at least five times during the first two months of the year, and recording in her *Journal* on January 29 that "One can never see it too often." She was equally fascinated by Landseer's painting of the lion-tamer, lolling comfortably among his big cats in spite of the visible scratches they have evidently inflicted on his arm and neck.

The collection's indebtedness, also, to the enthusiasm and keen eye of King Charles I is very evident in this exhibition, though many of the masterpieces the Stuart king collected were confiscated and sold after his execution. His purchase of the Gonzaga collection in

Mantua in 1625-27 was a giant leap forward, for it included works by Leonardo, Raphael, Titian, Correggio and Tintoretto (whose *Esther before Ahasuerus* remains in the royal collection, and is exhibited here alongside works by Van Dyck and Rubens, both of whom were attracted to the court by the king's interest).

After Charles and Victoria the most avid collectors seem to have been the later Georges. King George III and Queen Charlotte commissioned many works, including Zoffany's painting of the Tribuna of the Uffizi in Florence, and they also acquired the Consul Joseph Smith collection from Venice, which contained more than 40 Canalettos. King George IV was keener still, adding many Dutch and Flemish paintings to the collection as well as seven landscapes by Cuyp and Lawrence's magnificent portrait of Pope Pius VII.

The exhibition ends with Victoria, which more or less coincides with the cut-off date of the National Gallery's own collection, but the sad fact is that if the organisers had wanted to bring the exhibition more up to date they would have been in some difficulty. Recent monarchs seem to have been more interested in the curatorial side of things; many of the 7,000 paintings are on public display in the royal residences open to the public, or in the Queen's Gallery, or are generously lent to exhibitions such as this. But, after passing through the two galleries presenting the acquisitions of Victoria and Albert, visitors will look in vain for a gallery of later acquisitions. It seems there is nothing much to show.



King Henry VIII acquired A Protestant Allegory by Girolamo da Treviso, painted in about 1542.

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WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Six or seven ceasefires (the world has lost count) have come and gone, but still the fighting between Serbs and Croats in Yugoslavia goes on. The chairman of the peace conference, Lord Carrington, put a brave face on Europe's failure to create an effective and lasting agreement between Presidents Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and Franjo Tudjman of Croatia, and presided in mid-October over yet another meeting at The Hague. But the chances of the European Community peace initiative achieving its objective seemed as slim as ever. A ceasefire agreed on October 8 had called for the ending of the Croatian siege of the Yugoslav army barracks in Dalmatia and Zagreb, and the lifting of the Yugoslav army blockade of the Dalmatian ports and of

the eastern Croatian towns of Vinkovci and Vukovar, but the fighting continued.

The besieged town of Vukovar, in eastern Croatia, had become one of the key engagements in the conflict. Some 15,000 civilians were cut off and under attack by irregular Serbian nationalists, and the Croats were concerned that if the town fell this whole area of eastern Croatia would be lost to the Serbs. An EC-sponsored relief convoy of some 20 lorries and ambulances, carrying medicine and powdered milk and equipped to take out 300 wounded, failed to get through after four attempts, and Croatian forces continued to blockade Yugoslav federal army barracks in the heart of Zagreb.

The lesson seems clear. Any attempt to establish a lasting

peace by mutual agreement between Serbs and Croats, even when signed by the army commanders, is likely to be aborted on the ground, where nationalist militia on both sides have taken the fighting into their own hands and are clearly beyond the control of the local politicians. Lord Carrington's peacemakers will need help if they are to fashion a lasting political agreement. European governments want to do something, but are divided about what. The idea of a European task force of several thousand men did not meet with much support when it was first put forward. Europe has no standing military force available, no experience of raising one and cannot forget that active involvement in the area has led to world war.

A better plan might be to bring in a United Nations presence as part of a final settlement. The UN Secretary-General has already asked Cyrus Vance, the former US Secretary of State, to be his special representative in Yugoslavia, helping Lord Carrington where he can. It could be that some broader international acceptance of a political settlement, policed by the UN if necessary, would help make it stick. But that may not now happen until the Serbs and the Croats have exhausted themselves.

Croatian troops, Yugoslav federal forces (generally supporting Serbian militia), conscripts and civilians, left and right, were all embroiled in the conflict as skirmishing intensified into war during the summer months in spite of the European Community's peacekeeping attempts. Casualties were numbered in many hundreds, but no one was counting.



Above, Croats driving captured federal tanks towards their capital of Zagreb, which began to experience the horrors of war in the autumn, when it was subjected to air raids and other attacks from federal forces after Croats had blockaded federal army barracks in the city. Left, a Serbian militiaman fighting in East Croatia.



Civilians found themselves in the front line as Serbs and Croats took to fighting in the streets. Above, a Croatian family mourns at the funeral of a policeman killed during the fighting. Right, a Croatian refugee moves her belongings after her home in Nustar had been hit by a bomb during an air raid. In spite of the casualties there seemed no immediate prospect that either side was ready to call a halt.



Top right, Croatian forces manning a mortar. Centre, a wounded Croat being moved from hospital under sniper fire. Bottom right, a victim of the fighting lies in a bus station at Petrinja, 40km south of the Croatian capital of Zagreb. International attempts at peacekeeping, including the idea of sending in European or UN troops, were stalled because of fears of widening the conflict.





TALES OF LONDON'S OLD THEATRES

CHARLES OSBORNE DESCRIBES THE HISTORY AND DRAMA

SURROUNDING SOME OF THE MOST CELEBRATED ESTABLISHMENTS.

London's theatres have been among the city's principal attractions for more than 400 years. In the 16th century the most prestigious and the most popular were to be found south of the river in the borough of Southwark where the plays of Shakespeare, Marlowe and their Elizabethan contemporaries were first performed. Today, however, of London's more than 50 commercial theatres, the majority are situated in the West End. Some were built in the first half of the present century, but many are fascinating survivors from earlier times.

A few theatres were granted royal patents by various monarchs, originally giving them the monopoly of serious

acting and allowing each to be known as Theatre Royal (though from the 19th century this title was appropriated freely by many lesser theatres). Three years after his restoration, King Charles II awarded the first such patent to the newly-opened Theatre Royal, Drury Lane; a later one was granted by George III to the Theatre Royal, Haymarket.

Though today the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, has come to be associated with the large-scale musical, in its early days Nell Gwyn made her debut on its stage, and Samuel Pepys once complained of having caught cold from the draught that entered through the glazed cupola above the stalls.

When the original theatre was destroyed by fire early in 1672 it was rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren. Drury Lane was the theatre of Charles Macklin and David Garrick. It was also the theatre from which the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie at Culloden in 1746 was made known. The news was brought to George II in the Royal Box, but when the Hanoverian king attempted to address the audience his command of English was unequal to the task and he could only shout and wave the dispatches.

In a state of disrepair by 1791, the theatre was rebuilt, but burned down again in 1809; however, not before an attempted assassination of George III as

*The Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, was granted a patent by Charles II and drawn by Rowlandson for the *Tours of Dr Syntax*, left. Crowds, right, at the pantomime in 1870. Below right, Robert Schnebbelie's watercolour shows the exterior as remodelled in 1812.*

he attended the performance of a farce. The brewer Samuel Whitbread raised the funds to build the present theatre, which opened in 1812. Two years later Edmund Kean made his first appearance as Shylock. By the end of the century Drury Lane had become the home of spectacle. In 1931 Richard Tauber made his English debut there in Franz Lehár's operetta, *The Land of Smiles*. Later in the 1930s Ivor Novello's shows monopolised the theatre, and since the Second World War such favourites as *Oklahoma!*, *South Pacific* and *My Fair Lady* have graced its stage. The current attraction is *Miss Saigon*.

Drury Lane has its resident ghost, a 17th-century gentleman in a grey riding cloak and boots, carrying a sword, who appears occasionally at the back of the upper circle during matinées. The spectre which haunts the Haymarket Theatre is of one 19th-century manager who tends to wander about backstage late at night. The Haymarket, which opened in 1720, was the scene of a curious riot in 1805, when London's tailors, taking exception to a production of Samuel Foote's satire *The Tailors*, turned up *en masse*, threw their shears at the actors and rioted outside the theatre until they were dispersed by the army.

During the remodelling of London the Haymarket was rebuilt a few yards south to designs by John Nash and opened in its present form in 1821. In the years following the Second World War it became the place to see John Gielgud, Edith Evans, Wendy Hiller, Ralph Richardson, Peggy Ashcroft, Alec Guinness and other great actors in elegant new plays.

There are at least a dozen other 19th-century theatres still in use in London with pasts as colourful as those of the royal theatres. Foremost among them is the Adelphi, in the Strand, although it has been rebuilt several times since the first theatre, the Sans Pareil, was constructed in 1806 and given its present name in 1819. For many years the Adelphi specialised in adaptations of novels by Walter Scott and Charles Dickens until, in 1879, a new management engaged the popular actor William Terriss as leading man and mounted a series of what were to become known as "Adelphi melodramas". One of Terriss's greatest successes was in Seymour Hicks's play *One of the Best*—despite its being reviewed by Bernard Shaw in 1895 as "one of the worst".



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BRIDGMAN ART LIBRARY



The era of melodrama at the Adelphi came to an abrupt end in 1897, when Terriss was assassinated by a madman as he entered the theatre, and the building subsequently became a home for musical comedy. In 1930 the Adelphi was gutted, only its outer walls remaining. In its new guise it continued to house long-running successes, among them *Ever Green* and *Bless the Bride*; the tradition continues with the musical *Me and My Girl*, still running after seven and a half years.

Also in the Strand, close to the Adelphi, is the Vaudeville Theatre which, shortly after its opening in 1870, introduced to the London public in James Albery's comedy *The Two Roses* a young

man named Henry Irving, destined to become the greatest actor of his generation. The Vaudeville's speciality was farce, though in 1891 it staged as matinees the first productions in England of Ibsen's *Rosmersholm* and *Hedda Gabler*. From 1915 it became the home of André Charlot's famous revues. One of the Vaudeville's successes was Julian Slade's musical *Salad Days*, which played to full houses from 1954 until 1960.

The cosily attractive Criterion, in Piccadilly Circus, was considered a real novelty at its opening in 1874, since the whole auditorium lay underground and had to have air pumped into it. Two years later an actor called Charles

The Theatre Royal, Haymarket, above, redesigned by John Nash in 1821. Above right, much of Frank Matcham's original Victorian plasterwork decorates the modern Lyric Theatre in Hammersmith.

Wyndham, who was appearing there in a farce, took over the management of the theatre, where he staged a number of new plays, among them those of Henry Arthur Jones. Even when Wyndham left in 1899 to move a few hundred yards east to his own newly-built theatre, named after him, he remained the lessee of the Criterion. Among the illustrious performers who appeared there were Sybil Thorndike, Marie Tempest and John



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William Terriss, above, leading actor in many Adelphi melodramas, was stabbed to death outside the theatre, shown below, in 1897.



MANSELL COLLECTION

RIC GEMMILL

Gielgud. Terence Rattigan's *French Without Tears* ran for three years after its opening in 1936, but during the Second World War the theatre became a BBC studio, reverting to its proper use in 1945 with a revival of Sheridan's comedy *The Rivals*, in which Edith Evans played Mrs Malaprop. The Criterion is at present closed while redevelopment goes on all around it, but is expected to emerge refurbished, looking as charming as ever.

Wyndham opened his new theatre in Charing Cross Road with *David Garrick*, a revival of the play about the 18th-century actor in which Wyndham himself had already appeared with great success. When *An Englishman's Home*, by

Guy du Maurier, which dealt with the invasion of England, was staged there in January, 1909, it caused a sensation at a time of tension between Britain and Germany, and materially increased recruitment for the new Territorial Force (later the Territorial Army).

During the 1920s the crime writer Edgar Wallace managed Wyndham's. Seven of his thrillers were first produced at the theatre, including his last, *The Green Pack*, which opened in 1932 on the night before Wallace died in Hollywood. Among the most successful plays staged there were *Daphne Laureola* (1949), in which Edith Evans gave one of her finest performances and the young Peter Finch

made his first London appearance; *The Love of Four Colonels* (1951), which starred its author, Peter Ustinov; and *Oh What a Lovely War!* from Joan Littlewood's Theatre Royal, Stratford East (1963). The choice of Wyndham's for the recent world première of Arthur Miller's new play, *The Ride Down Mt Morgan*, shows that America's finest living playwright, too, believes in the theatre's reputation for good luck.

Far from being a lucky house the Playhouse, at the Embankment end of Northumberland Avenue, has had long periods of ill-fortune. Almost as soon as it was built it seemed likely that the South Eastern Railway Company would



JEN PICTURE LIBRARY

require its site for an extension to Charing Cross station, but this threat passed and the theatre, then known as the Avenue, opened in 1882. After a few years of comedy and light opera the Avenue was acquired in 1905 by the actor-manager Cyril Maude, who promptly demolished and rebuilt it. On December 5 of that year, however, the roof of Charing Cross station collapsed and wrecked the almost-completed theatre. Maude had to rebuild again, and reopened it 14 months later as the Playhouse. The theatre's only really successful years were between 1917 and 1933 under the management of Gladys Cooper. It then sank into the doldrums, became a BBC radio studio in 1951, and has only recently begun to enjoy a new lease of life as the home of the Peter Hall Company.

London has two Lyric Theatres, both dating from 1888. The one in Shaftesbury Avenue is the oldest surviving theatre on that theatrical thoroughfare, a beautiful Victorian house which for many years specialised in comic opera, although the great Italian actress Eleonora Duse made her 1894 London début there in *La Dame aux Camélias*. In the 1950s *The Little Hut*, a comedy by André Roussin starring Robert Morley, ran there for 1,261 performances. The current song-and-dance show, *Five Guys Named Moe*, shows no signs of flagging after a year and seems likely to do as well.

The other Lyric Theatre, in Hammersmith, first opened as the Lyric Hall, but seven years later was rebuilt to a design by the great theatre architect Frank Matcham. Lily Langtry spoke the Prologue on the opening night in 1895, but the standard of productions there-

after was low, and before long the Lyric became known locally as "the blood and flea pit". In 1918 the theatre was taken over by Nigel Playfair, whose productions included the remarkable 1920 revival of *The Beggar's Opera*, by John Gay, which ran for three and a half years. Ellen Terry made her final stage appearance at the Lyric in 1925 in *Crossings*, by Walter de la Mare, and the theatre housed John Gielgud's celebrated repertory season of 1952-53, which included *Venice Preserved*, *Richard II* (with Paul Scofield) and *The Way of the World*.

The Lyric Hammersmith closed in 1966 and was demolished six years later. Much of its elegant Victorian plasterwork was preserved, panel by panel, and reassembled within the shell of the present modern building some 20 yards from the original site. The new Lyric opened in 1979 with Bernard Shaw's *You Never Can Tell*.

The Garrick Theatre in Charing Cross Road was itself at the centre of a real-life tragedy in 1895, six years after its opening, while Mrs Patrick Campbell was giving a highly-praised performance in Pinero's *The Notorious Mrs Ebbsmith*. A woman of the same name, found drowned in the Thames, had the used counterfoil of a ticket for the drama in her pocket; she had written to a friend that the play had preyed on her mind. Happier occasions at the Garrick have included *Love on the Dole* which, in 1935, established Wendy Hiller as a star, and Joan Littlewood's ebullient production of *Fings Ain't Wot They Used T'Be*, which packed in the audiences for two years from 1960.

One of the most imposing of West End theatres, the Palace, in Cambridge Circus, began its life in 1891 as the Royal English Opera House, opening with *Ivanhoe*, the only grand opera by Sir Arthur Sullivan of the Gilbert and Sullivan partnership. *Ivanhoe* had a run of 160 consecutive performances, which is surely unique for an opera, but its successor, *La Basoche*, by André Messager failed to attract the public and the theatre was soon taken over by Augustus Harris, who turned it into a music-hall, the Palace Theatre of Varieties. A large theatre, it has housed a number of successful operettas and musicals from *No, No, Nanette* (1925 through *Song of Norway* 1946) and the six-year run of *The Sound of Music* (1961) to the RSC's present long-running hit, *Les Misérables*, which has played there since 1985.

Built in 1892, the Duke of York's Theatre, in St Martin's Lane, was taken over five years later by the American impresario Charles Frohman, who staged a number of important modern plays there. Somerset Maugham's *Land*



MICHAEL LE POER TRENCH

of Promise (1914) was the last one put on by Frohman before he died when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed in 1915. The Duke of York's has the dubious honour of having housed one of the shortest runs on record: a comedy called *13 for Dinner*, which opened—and closed—on December 17, 1953.

But what of that original theatre district south of the Thames where it all began? None of the great Southwark theatres still stands, although the foundations of the Rose Theatre—so called because it was built in 1587 on what had once been a rose garden—were excavated two years ago during construction of a new office block beside Southwark Bridge and are now protected beneath the aptly-named Rose Court. The Swan Theatre, which stood on present-day Hopton Street, found itself in trouble soon after it opened over the 1597 production of *The Isle of Dogs*, a seditious comedy by Thomas Nashe and Ben Jonson. A few years later its impresario decamped after taking the audience's money at the door, leaving the theatre to the mercy of an angry crowd.

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Of all the lost theatres of London the Globe, with its Shakespearian associations, has most firmly captured the popular imagination. In this summer theatre, with roofing over the stage and the galleries but not over the cheapest seats in the pit, were presented most of Shakespeare's plays; and its company of actors, led by Richard Burbage, was the finest of its time. When the original 1598 building burnt down in 1613 the Globe was rebuilt, only to be demolished 30 years later.

As a result of the dedication and enthusiasm of American actor-director Sam Wanamaker, a replica of the Globe is currently being built on Bankside, only a few hundred yards from its original site, and is expected to open in 1993. Although the remains of the old theatre have recently been accurately located, it is doubtful whether they can be excavated to provide useful information for the architects of the new Globe because they partly lie beneath a listed Georgian terrace in Southwark Bridge Road. Perhaps the new Globe will revive Southwark's theatrical fortunes □

MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY

*Binnie Hale and Seymour Beard
in the 1925 hit No, No, Nanette! at the
Palace Theatre, opposite left.*

The citizens of Paris man the barricades in the theatre's current production, Les Misérables, above. Below, the Swan, one of Southwark's vanished theatres.



THE REAL REINDEER



Santa's flying sleigh-pullers are
Christmas favourites,
but the real animals are just as
remarkable and useful.

Text and photographs by Bryan
and Cherry Alexander.



The versatile reindeer can be raced, previous page, but more usually it is employed as a draught or pack animal. Its broad feet and buoyant fur help it swim across quite wide expanses of water when heading for its feeding grounds in the summer, above.

Santa Claus and his magical flying reindeer have become a major tradition of Christmas. But both the persona of Santa as we know him today and his reindeer were chiefly the work of an American Hebrew scholar and professor of Oriental and Greek literature. Clement Clarke Moore wrote his poem *The Visit of Saint Nicholas* to amuse his children in 1822, and, although never intended for publication, it became very popular with both the American and the British public. Believing, perhaps, that it would diminish his academic prestige, it was not until 1844 that he admitted to having written the poem.

St Nicholas, the fourth-century bishop of Myra in Asia Minor (a city which once stood near the coast of Lycia, Turkey), had previously been depicted as a saintly man riding on a grey horse. He is the patron saint of children, scholars, sailors, maidens, pawnbrokers and the unjustly imprisoned, but reindeer herding was never claimed as an attribute. However, reindeer are a more romantic form of transport than horses, for they live in the mysterious, little-known lands of the far north—remote enough for Santa Claus's headquarters.

Moore named his reindeer Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner and Blitzen; scientists call them

Rangifer tarandus, which does not have the same ring to it at all. There are five subspecies of reindeer, but generally those in North America and Greenland are referred to as caribou and the European and Asian ones as reindeer.

Reindeer thrive in regions of prolonged cold and snow because they have made the physical and behavioural adaptations that allow them to survive where no other deer could live. They are completely covered in fur—even their ears and noses. A fine, dense undercoat and a thick overcoat of hollow guard hairs traps an insulating layer of air around the animal. The nose is blunt and acts as a heat exchanger, warming inhaled air and cooling exhaled air to prevent heat and moisture loss from breathing. The feet are much larger and broader than those of other deer species and in winter reindeer grow a layer of hair between their toes. These specially adapted feet allow them to walk easily over snow, ice and soft ground, and to scrape away snow to feed on lichens. With their buoyant fur and big feet, reindeer are excellent swimmers, capable of crossing wide stretches of open water.

Mature bulls have magnificent antlers and, uniquely among deer species, cows are similarly equipped. Development of the antlers takes place at different times



The impressive spectacle of a reindeer herd on the move, above. In the north of Norway herders go with their animals in the spring to greener pastures by the coast, returning in autumn to the inland tundra.



Lapps, left, have depended on the reindeer for clothing and food since the Ice Age. Antlers are shed seasonally, by males in November and females in spring, or are broken off in rutting.



Above, after a long absence reindeer have returned to the Highlands of Scotland. Heather has proved an acceptable substitute for the animals' native diet of reindeer moss, but litter has caused deaths.



Left, a dark bull and grey cow. Males guard their harems vigorously and in the rutting season, each September, young bulls must wait their turn. Calving takes place eight months later, in May.



It is nearly 40 years since Mikel Utsi set up the Cairngorms herd, but it has grown slowly. Tilly Smith, above, plans to build it up to 250 animals and considers that reindeer are well suited to life in the Scottish Highlands.

of the year according to sex. The male's start to grow, covered in a soft velvet, in March, developing quickly from May to July, then harden and lose the velvet by September, ready for use as weapons to guard the harem against other interested males. After the rut older males shed their antlers in early November. The female's antlers start development in June and are out of velvet by the end of September. The cows retain their antlers throughout the winter to help them defend their feeding craters in the snow for themselves and for their calves, and to give them dominance over the antler-less males. They shed their antlers within days of calving in the spring.

The earliest reindeer fossils, dating from 400,000 years ago, were found in Europe, and at one time the species thrived in most parts of the northern hemisphere north of 50°N latitude. However, climatic changes and pressures on their habitat progressively reduced their range to the USSR, Spitsbergen, Greenland and Scandinavia. As one of the first animals to inhabit Scandinavia at the end of the last Ice Age, 10,000 years ago, the reindeer has long been exploited by the Lapps as an important source of food and clothing. Initially they hunted wild reindeer, but since the 17th century herding has gradually replaced hunting.

Short and rotund, with cheeks ruddy from a lifetime spent out of doors, and dressed in bright scarlet and blue clothes, the Lapps perhaps bear a passing resemblance to the traditional depictions of Santa Claus.

The reindeer's considerable economic value to the people of the far north unexpectedly enhanced by the sale of antlers in velvet to the Far East, where they are believed to be an aphrodisiac has led to the animal's return, or recent introduction, to the sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia, Iceland and Scotland. The most ambitious scheme has been in Alaska and Canada's North West Territories, where *R. tarandus* now thrives in areas that were once the preserve of the great caribou herds. The latter were nearly wiped out by over-hunting but are recovering and, as numbers of caribou increase, so do calls to allow hunting to restart within the range of the reindeer herd.

There is a belief that reindeer survived in Scotland until the 12th century, but it is more likely that they died out in early post-glacial times, at the end of the Pleistocene era. Their reintroduction was the work of a Swedish Lapp, Mikel Utsi, who brought over a number of mountain reindeer in 1952 with the aim of providing an extra source of meat in the days of



rationing after the Second World War. The herd failed to thrive as expected and numbers did not increase sufficiently to make meat production an economic proposition. Undaunted, Utsi imported more reindeer, of both mountain and forest strains, to establish which type was best suited to the land around Aviemore. It soon became clear that the animals were quite content to remain on the unfenced upland area of the Cairngorms, and those that did stray could be enticed back to the home range by the mineral licks provided there.

Mikel Utsi's wife managed the herd after he died in 1979, until her own death in 1988. Alan Smith, who had worked as the reindeer-keeper since 1978, took over the herd the following year, together with his wife Tilly, a zoologist. While not ruling out the possibility of raising deer for meat later, they are concentrating on building up the numbers from 100 to an eventual total of 250 animals. The task is made harder when animals are killed by eating litter left on the hills and through worrying by dogs, which hazards account for 10 per cent of the herd each year.

Tilly Smith describes their reindeer as a display herd. Each day she takes groups for a short walk onto the hill to see the animals in their natural surroundings. The reindeer wait at the gate to greet

Real reindeer that will eat from your hand, above, and fictional ones that bring sacks from Santa Claus have ousted Saint Nicholas's horse, below, from the Christmas celebrations.



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their visitors and take food gently from the hands of even the tiniest children. When the titbits are finished and the animals have checked any pockets just to be sure, they drift away, feet clicking as they go, a noise produced by a tendon slipping over a bone in the foot.

Tilly Smith explains that reindeer are well suited to life in the Scottish Highlands. When the weather sends red deer and sheep seeking the shelter of the valleys, their reindeer remain on the wind-swept hilltops where they can find food easily. Because they do not damage young trees, growth of the Scots pine is not impaired. "I'd like to get rid of the sheep and deer from the tops and cover the hills with reindeer," she continues.

Christmas is a busy time for Tilly and Alan Smith. Their trained oxen (castrated bull reindeer) pull sleighs on wheels at shopping-centre promotions all over Britain, the stars of the show being three reindeer from *Santa Claus—The Movie*. The reindeer all have names, and after you have met them you can even adopt one at the Smiths' estimate of £18 a year. The Reindeer Support Scheme leaflet reminds readers that "Reindeer are not immortal—they do die eventually."

But surely not the ones that pull St Nicholas's sleigh □



Detail from THE YOUTHFUL ARTIST by Benjamin Matveevich Basso, Moscow (1913-1982)
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CHRISTMAS BEFORE DICKENS

American author Washington Irving painted a vivid portrait of a traditional English Christmas celebrated with medieval vigour before Dickens's time, reveals James Munson.

"There is nothing in England that exercises a more delightful spell over my imagination than the lingerings of the holiday customs of former times . . . Of all the old festivals, Christmas awakens the strongest and most heartfelt associations." A picture of Christmas celebrations of "old England" has survived in the essays of the early-19th-century American writer Washington Irving, the creator of *Rip Van Winkle*. His portrait is of the English Christmas before the Victorians got hold of it, a period before Dickens's writings, before turkeys, Christmas trees and cards, Father Christmases and crackers—a Christmas whose celebrations reached back to medieval life. It was a time of feasting and celebration, of dancing and masques, of pigs' heads, sirloins and wassail. In its exuberance and sheer joy it seems as attractive today as it did in 1819, when Irving first described it in his *Sketch Book*.

To Washington Irving Christmas was not just the great Christian festival which "commemorates the announcement of the religion of peace and love" but the season for "gathering together of family connections, and drawing closer again those bands of kindred hearts, which the cares and pleasures and sorrows of the world are continually operating to cast loose". There is, he felt, "something in the very season of the year that gives a charm to the festivity of Christmas". The short days and long nights, and the cold weather mean our "thoughts are more concentrated: our friendly sympathies more aroused. We feel more sensibly the charm of each other's society . . ."

Washington Irving was born in New York City in 1783. His mother came from England, his father from Scotland and the boy grew up longing to visit the mother country. His parents wanted him to become a lawyer but he preferred writing and in 1809 made a name for himself with the comic *History of New York . . . by Diedrich Knickerbocker*. In 1815 he came to Liverpool to help in his father's mercantile concern. Three years later the business was wound up and Irving could devote himself to writing.

He excelled in writing essays and set himself the task of explaining English life to his compatriots. He was fascinated by those traditions of the medieval Christmas that had survived the purges of 17th-century Puritans and 18th-century Methodists. After doing his research he invented a fictional country house where the old customs prevailed, Bracebridge Hall, and set it in Yorkshire. (Tradition has it that Aston Hall, in the West Midlands, served as his model.)

Squire Bracebridge of Bracebridge Hall was one of Irving's finest creations. He was a "fine healthy-looking old



MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY

Above, Washington Irving was an enthusiast for traditional English Christmas customs.

Left, "the butler entered the hall . . . and bore a silver dish, on which was an enormous pig's head". Below, "a pie, magnificently decorated with peacocks' feathers".

gentleman, with silver hair curling lightly round an open florid countenance". He was a "strenuous advocate for the revival of the old rural games and holiday observances"—in other words an antiquarian like Irving himself. In his story the author, adopting the guise of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent, is among the guests at the Hall and leads us through the activities that marked Christmastide.

When Crayon approached the Hall on Christmas Eve, he found "an irregular building of some magnitude" and heard music and laughter from the servants' quarters, where the old games were still played: "hoodman blind", "shoe the wild mare", "hot cockles", "steal the white loaf", "bob apple" and "snap dragon". Inside, the rooms were decorated with holly and mistletoe. (The privilege of a free kiss under the mistletoe was a limited one: at each kiss a berry had to be picked and when all the berries had gone, so had the free kisses.)

In the fireplace lay the giant yule clog—a great length of wood, or sometimes a root, brought into the house on

Christmas Eve and lighted with a remnant of the previous year's clog. It was meant to burn all night and misfortune was said to come if the fire died out. Well into the 19th century a yule clog or log was burnt in the north of England and superstitions still surrounded it. It was said that if someone with a squint came into the house ill-luck would follow. If a barefoot visitor entered the house he, too, would bring bad luck; in December he might bring a rash of colds as well.

Late on Christmas Eve, as the family and guests were going to bed, the waits or band of musicians came from a nearby village to serenade the squire. Christmas morning saw family, servants and guests gather for morning prayers, read by the squire, after which they could tuck into "what the squire denominated true old English fare". He had no time for "modern breakfasts of tea-and-toast, which he censured as among the causes of modern effeminacy and weak nerves". Instead there was a "brave display of cold meats, wine and ale".

The party dutifully made its way to the parish church for Holy Communion. These were the days before church organs were widespread, so the parish "orchestra", confined to the small gallery at the back of the church and consisting of a fiddle, "clarionet" and bass-viol, provided what music there was. For his part the parson bored his listeners stiff with "a most erudite sermon on the rites and ceremonies of Christmas".

As soon as the squire and his party had made their way back to the Hall they were entertained, not by today's tame groups of carollers out to collect for charity but by a "band of village lads, without coats, their shirtsleeves fancifully tied with ribands, their hats decorated with greens, and clubs in their hands". These boys "performed a curious and intricate dance . . . striking their

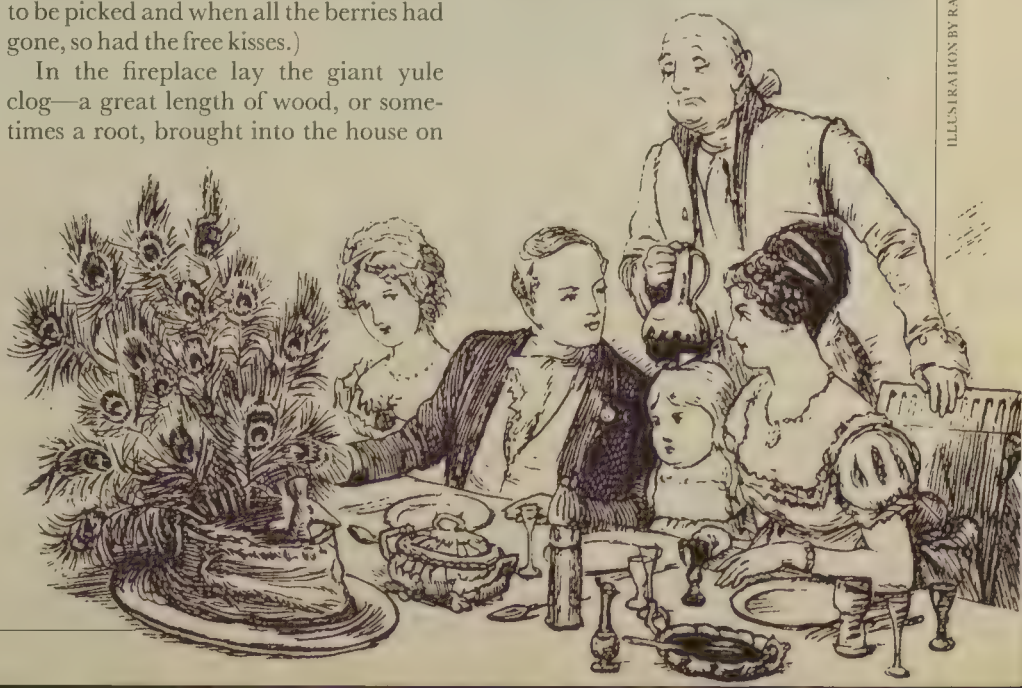


ILLUSTRATION BY RANDOLPH CALDECOTT



ingredient, but honest good humour is the oil and wine of a merry meeting, and there is no jovial companionship equal to that where the jokes are rather small, and the laughter abundant."

Following dinner and the reunion of the sexes came the entertainments. This was no time for little cups of coffee and polite chit-chat but for a Christmas masque or pantomime performed by the children of the guests and presided over by a Lord of Misrule. Here "Ancient Christmas" escorted "Dame Mince-Pie" in a stately procession round the room, followed by "Maid Marian", "Robin Hood", "Roast Beef" and "Plum Pudding". There were stories and carols and dancing, and "as the old manor house almost reeled with mirth and was-sail, it seemed echoing back the joviality of long-departed years".

On this high note Washington Irving's description of a traditional English Christmas ends. His phrase, the "joviality of long-departed years", seems to sum up the picture he was painting. Fictional but not inaccurate, for he was able to add later: "The author had afterwards an opportunity of witnessing almost all the customs above described, existing in unexpected vigour in the skirts of Derbyshire and Yorkshire." (In the event, the Christmas essays were influential in reviving interest in the old games.) Those critics who charged him with "escapism" he answered in words that still ring true: "It is so much pleasanter to please than to instruct—to play the companion rather than the preceptor. What, after all, is the mite of wisdom that I could throw into the mass of knowledge? . . . If, however, I can by any lucky chance, in these days of evil, rub out one wrinkle from the brow of care, or beguile the heavy heart of one moment of sorrow . . . and make my reader more in good humour with his fellow-beings and himself, surely, surely, I shall not then have written entirely in vain." □



clubs together . . . while one, whimsically crowned with a fox's skin, the tail of which flaunted down his back, kept capering round the skirts of the dance, and rattling a Christmas-box with many antic gesticulations". Most of Irving's readers, English as well as American, would have been intrigued by his description of country dancers as the custom had sadly disappeared in

many parts of England and had not been transported to the colonies, at least not by the Puritans.

The dancers were then entertained to "brawn and beef, and stout home-brewed". The squire, an enthusiast for the revival of these old country traditions, admitted that

the dances were as often as not followed by "rough cudgel-play and broken heads".

Inside the Hall the day's festivities really began with Christmas dinner in the great hall, when the servants carrying the food were summoned in the old-fashioned way by a rolling-pin being struck on the kitchen dresser. On the sideboard or "beaufet" the squire's silver gleamed while two yule candles burned brightly. Music was provided by a harpist, although Geoffrey Crayon admitted that the musician twanged his instrument "with a vast deal more power than melody". "Never," Crayon continued "did Christmas board display a more goodly and gracious assemblage of countenances: those who were not handsome were, at least, happy; and happiness is a rare improver of your hard-favoured visage."

After grace had been said by the parson, the butler entered, "attended by a servant on each side with a large wax-light", carrying a silver platter on which

Above, "A band of country lads . . . performed an intricate dance". Left, "He raised . . . the Wassail Bowl in both hands and struck up an old chanson". Below, "... an enormous Yule-log glowing and blazing, and sending forth a vast volume of light and heat".

was "an enormous pig's head, decorated with rosemary, with a lemon in its mouth".

These were the happy days before Englishmen adopted the custom of dining in strictly ordered courses—the *service à la Russe*—so various dishes competed on the table for the guests' attention. The squire's favourite was "ancient sirloin", which was, above all dishes, the "standard of old English hospitality, and a joint of goodly presence and full of expectation". There was also an enormous pie decorated with a peacock's tail. The filling should have been peacock as well but the squire rather feebly argued that "there had been such a mortality among the peacocks this season, that he could not prevail upon himself to have one killed". Pheasants had been called upon to make the sacrifice instead.

After dinner, when the cloth had been removed, the "honest emblem of Christmas joviality", the wassail bowl, began its course round the table, starting with the squire. The liquid was, our guide informs us, "a potation, indeed, that might well make the heart of a toper leap within him; being composed of the richest and raciest wines, highly spiced and sweetened, with roasted apples bobbing about the surface". But wassail was not always similar to our modern mulled wine; sometimes it was made of ale to which nutmeg, sugar, ginger, apples and even toast had been added. Once the bowl had made its round, the ladies withdrew and the gentlemen were left to discuss those subjects which "would not exactly do for a lady's ear". If there was not much wit there was a great deal of good humour, for, as Irving observed, "Wit, after all, is a mighty tart, pungent



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50 THINGS TO DO AT CHRISTMAS

Suggestions to suit all ages and tastes, from the solitary to the sociable, compiled by Faith Clark. Illustrations by Arthur Robins.

1 PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS

A good preparation for the holiday season would be a short stay at the Cotswold House Hotel in Chipping Campden, which is offering November weekend breaks during which you will be given ideas for creating the perfect Christmas. Tutors will demonstrate the art of water-colour painting on silk for Christmas cards, ideas for Christmas wrapping, seasonal decorations and flower-arranging and Christmas cookery. From £78.50 per person, inclusive of full board. A non-participating partner can come along at a reduced rate. Available for the weekends of November 6-7 and 19-20.

Cotswold House, Chipping Campden, Glos (0386 840330).

2 FAMILY CARDS

For a lower cost (per unit) than some of the more expensive Christmas cards, you can have your family photographed in the setting of your choice, compose a Christmas text or poem and send the resulting card to 250 of your friends. The cards work out at about £1.65 each, plus £300 for the photographic session (and you can keep all the rest of the photographs for the album). The whole process takes about three and a half weeks from start to finish—cut-off date November 20 for posting by December 15.

Photographic Records, 123 Oxford Gardens, London W10 (081-960 3199).

3 SUGAR PLUM FAIRIES

Two productions of the ballet world's favourite Christmas treat, Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, which includes the Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy, the battle between the mice and the toy soldiers, and the miraculously-growing Christmas tree, are on offer in London this year. One is performed by the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, the other by the English National Ballet at the Festival Hall.

Royal Ballet, Royal Opera House, London WC2 (071-240 1066).

English National Ballet, Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, London SE1 (071-928 8800).



ANTHONY CRICKMAY

English National Ballet presents *The Nutcracker*.



4 FESTIVE OPERA

The Royal Opera has a lavish production of Puccini's *Turandot* at Wembley Arena from December 29 until January 8, complete not only with *Nessun dorma* but with video screens and a huge cast of actors and dancers to join with the singers. Back in its smaller but more sumptuous home in Covent Garden, the Royal Opera is staging Mozart first *Mitridate, rè di Ponto* (with the first night on December 5, the 200th anniversary of the composer's death), and then *Le nozze di Figaro*. At the Coliseum, English National Opera is presenting Johann Strauss's operetta *Die Fledermaus* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Christmas Eve*. If you take a box, the ENO catering department will serve mulled wine, turkey sandwiches and hot mince pies there for about £6 a head (available from December 12 to 23; order by 2pm the previous day). *Wembley Arena, Wembley, Middx (081-900 1234)*. *Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London WC2 (071-240 1066)*. *English National Opera, London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (071-836 3161; catering, 071-836 0111, ext 324)*.

5 RIDING IN THE PARKS

Traditional Christmas exercise for the fashionable equestrian means Rotten Row in Hyde Park. You can hire a horse from Ross Nye in central London for £16 an hour (not Christmas Day). There is more room in Richmond Park, where the Stag Lodge stables will escort you for £19 an hour. On Boxing Day Wimbledon Village Stables organise the Tally-Ho ride, with elements of a meet, mounted rally and gymkhana across Wimbledon Common and Richmond Park, with prizes for turn-out, jumping and other excitements. Entrance fee £5; horses can be hired at stables around the edge of the Park.

Ross Nye Stables, 8 Bathurst Street Mews, London W2 (071-262 3791). *Stag Lodge Stables, Robin Hood Gate, Kingston Vale, London SW15 (081-546 9863)*. *Wimbledon Village Stables, 24A & B, High Street, London SW19 (081-946 8579)*.

6 CHRISTMAS EXHIBITIONS

The Magi and the Gift: a Celebration of Christmas, at the Victoria and Albert Museum from November 20, examines how the symbolism of the three kings, the shepherds and their gifts is reflected in the paintings and prints of the Old Masters.



Rimsky-Korsakov's opera *Christmas Eve* at ENO.

Museum admission £3 for adults. At the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood from December 1 is an introduction to Christmas around the world featuring Old Father Christmas, Neapolitan crib figures and the American Santa Claus.

Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 (071-938 8441). *Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood, Cambridge Heath Road, London E2 (071-980 2415), closed on Friday*.

7 VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME

Your time could be a valuable Christmas gift. Every year Crisis sets up a centre to help London's homeless during the Christmas period (in 1990 they served 3,000 meals, 60,000 cups of tea, treated 500 people in the medical unit, distributed 3,800 items of clothing, gave 800 haircuts and provided a roof for 600 people a night). This huge operation needs volunteers, to prepare the centre four or five days before it opens (moving quantities of food, sorting clothes and setting up equipment), and help from carpenters, electricians, plumbers etc. When it is open (December 23-30) any volunteers with special skills doctors, nurses, hairdressers, chiropodists etc—are invited to put them to good use, but everyone needs to be prepared for anything from lavatory cleaning to potato-peeling to serving tea. And after December 30 more volunteers are needed to clear away and return the site to its former state.

Crisis, 7 Whitechapel Road, London E1 (071-377 1489)

8 CHRISTMAS AT SEA

Wherever there is deep water, an exotic location and a bit of warmth, an elegant cruise ship will almost invariably be found. Among this year's offers is the *Royal Viking Sun's* 22 days from Fort Lauderdale in Florida to San Francisco, passing through the Panama Canal on Christmas Day, and calling en route at the Virgin Islands, Guadaloupe, Venezuela, Costa Rica and Mexico (fly from London on December 13, return January 6). The Norwegian Cruise Line's SS *Norway* has a nine-day cruise from Miami around the Bahamas, including the line's own private island, Great Stirrup Cay (fly from London on December 27, return January 5).

Royal Viking & Norwegian Cruise Lines, Brook House, 229-243 Shepherd's Bush Road, London W6 (071-734 0773, Royal Viking Line; 071-408 0046, Norwegian Cruise Line).

9 A CHOICE OF CAROLS

For many centuries Christmas has been celebrated by the singing of carols, and today London probably has more carol concerts and services than any other capital city. A more comprehensive list can be found on page 83, but here are some worthy of particular note. In Westminster Abbey on Christmas Eve, in addition to the traditional service of lessons and carols (3pm, admission by ticket) and Christmas Eucharist (11.30pm, admission by ticket), a children's crib service will be held at noon. St Paul's Cathedral's Christmas starts with a performance of Handel's *Messiah* on December 10 at 6pm, followed by a concert of Christmas music with the City of London Sinfonia on December 18 at 6.15pm, and carols on Christmas Eve at 4pm. Westminster Cathedral holds a beautiful candle-lit Christmas celebration (including a wide variety of traditional and unusual readings, carols and prayers) on December 17 at 7pm (admission by ticket). The Chapel Royal in Marlborough Road opposite St James's Palace (partly surviving from Henry V's great Tudor palace), will be open to the public for services on Christmas Day (Holy Communion at 8.30am, Sung Eucharist at 11.15am).

For children, popular carol concerts are those of the Bach Choir in the Royal Albert Hall,



conducted by Sir David Willcocks. The audience participation is strong, with children from seven to 10 being invited on to the stage to form an impromptu choir. Dates this year are December 15 and 22, at 3pm. Also in the Albert Hall is probably the most glittering carol concert of the season, the annual "Joy to the World" celebration, to be held on December 17 at 7.30pm, attended this year by the Princess of Wales. In aid of charity (this year the Royal Marsden Hospital Cancer Appeal and Save the Children), a host of stars tell the story of Christmas within the setting of the medieval mystery plays. This great pageant will be performed by a cast of thousands, with massed choirs and orchestras providing the music, and the audience joining in the carols.

Westminster Abbey, The Chapter Office, 20 Dean's Yard, London SW1 (071-222 5152). St Paul's Cathedral, London ECA (071-248 2705). Westminster Cathedral, London SW1 (071-834 7452). Albert Hall, London SW7 (071-589 8212).

10 OLYMPIA SHOWJUMPING

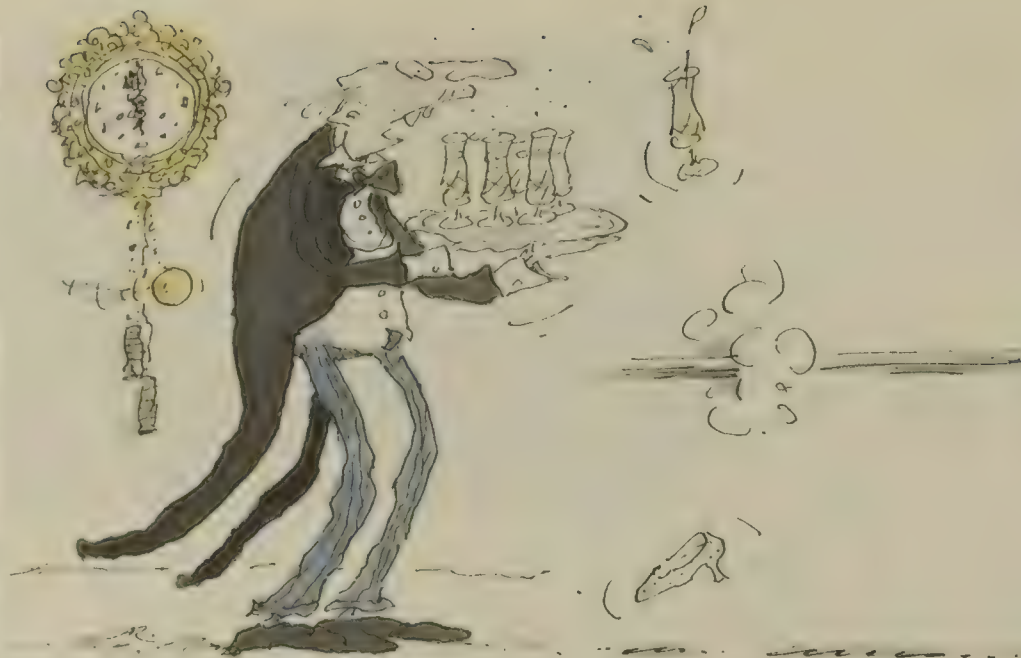
Of all Britain's show-jumping events, this is the most popular. From December 18 to 22 the stars of the show-jumping world compete for big money as well as doing a great deal of high-spirited showing off. Each evening ends with a Christmas spectacular. You can rent a box and entertain guests over a leisurely dinner while you watch the show.

Olympia, Hammersmith Road, London W14 (071-373 8141).

11 TIME FOR PANTOMIME

The usual wide choice of pantomimes is on offer in and around London, including this year rival Dick Whittingtons (Rula Lenska at the Wimbledon Theatre and Pauline Quirke at the Hackney Empire), Jacks with their beanstalks (Cilla Black at London's Piccadilly Theatre and Ronnie Corbett at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley), and Cinderellas in Richmond, Croydon and Leatherhead. Other offerings include a Victorian *Beauty and the Beast* at the Players' Theatre, underneath the arches of Charing Cross station, and, for the pre-school and primary gang, *Postman Pat's Special Delivery* at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith.

Wimbledon Theatre, 93 The Broadway, London SW19 (081-540 0362). Hackney Empire, 291 Mare St, London E8 (081-985 2424). Piccadilly Theatre, Denman Street,



London W1 (071-867 1118). Churchill, Bromley, Kent (081-460 6677). Richmond Theatre, Richmond, Surrey (081-940 0088). Ashcroft, Croydon, Surrey (081-688 9291). Thorndike, Leatherhead, Surrey (0372 377677). Players', The Arches, Villiers Street, London WC2 (071-839 1134). Lyric Hammersmith, King Street, London W6 (081-741 2311).

12 STAR-STUDDED BALLS

Christmas and New Year are traditionally times for charities to hold major fund-raising balls. Among the many, SOS (Stars Organisation for Spastics) will hold their annual star-studded bash at the Hilton on December 1. The cabaret at this ball is terrific every year, and always a closely-guarded secret. Tickets £75 per person. The Creative Ball, in aid of the Save the Children Fund, will be at Grosvenor House on December 6, tickets £89 per person. The Cinderella Ball at the Savoy on December 17 is in aid of the NSPCC, £65 per ticket. And on New Year's Eve the Entertainment Artistes' Benevolent Fund will hold its ball at the Royal

Lancaster Hotel, £125 per ticket. SOS Ball, 071-637 9681. Creative Ball, 071-287 5667. Cinderella Ball, 071-405 3344. Entertainment Artistes' Benevolent Fund, 081-898 8164.

13 CHOOSING A PET

Giving a dog or cat as a Christmas present is a bad idea, but Christmas, when the family is all together, can be a good moment to discuss the idea of a pet, including such essential matters as whose responsibility the animal will be, who will feed it, clear up after it, take it to the vet and, in the case of dogs, give it regular exercise. If the family decides in favour, then after the holiday you might go together to one of the RSPCA animal shelters. The Mayhew Home in Willesden and the Southridge Animal Centre near South Mimms seek responsible owners for abandoned dogs and cats.

Mayhew Animal Home, Trenmar Gardens, Harrow Road, London NW10 (081-969 0178). Southridge Animal Centre, Packhorse Lane, Ridge, Herts (0707 42153).

14 WEMBLEY CARNIVAL 2000

Described as Britain's largest indoor funfair, Carnival 2000 will feature free Globe of Death shows, nerve-racking rides, side-shows and more. Open daily, except Christmas Day, from December 20 to January 12 this gigantic Christmas funfair sounds guaranteed to delight the kids and horrify the adults. Celebrity appearances are promised in the evening if you last that long.

Exhibition Halls, Wembley Stadium, Wembley, Middx (081-900 1234).

15 COLD-WATER SWIMMING

In Hyde Park at 9am on Christmas morning some 30 hardy members of the Serpentine Swimming Club plunge into the icy waters to race over 100 yards for the Peter Pan Cup—J. M. Barrie having been a member in the 1920s. If you feel like taking a dip but don't want to race, you will find other blue bodies splashing about in the pools on Hampstead Heath. No point in going too early, unless you want to break the ice.



Christmas Day swimmers take their annual dip in the Serpentine, Hyde Park.

16 DRIVING AT SILVERSTONE

If the contest between Nigel Mansell and Ayrton Senna has fired your enthusiasm for motor racing, you can have a go yourself on the Silverstone circuit, or buy the experience as a gift for a favourite nephew or uncle, through the John Watson Performance Driving Centre. It has a racing school, a skid school and a rally centre, plus an advanced driving course. An introduction to the thrills of single-seat racing round Silverstone costs about £80. Pupils need a valid driving licence and strong nerves.

John Watson Driving Centre, Silverstone Circuit, Towcester, Northants (0327 857177).

17 SURPRISE A WORKER

Some people have to work on Christmas Day. Perhaps a nurse or local fireman, policeman, telephone operator, power worker or petrol-pump attendant would appreciate a December 25 visit and a little surprise gift. If you order in advance the Beverly Hills Bakery will deliver a delicious selection of freshly-baked mini-muffins, brownies, cookies and home-made jams which would certainly cheer up a lonely worker's Christmas Day.

Beverly Hills Bakery, 225a Brompton Road, London SW3 (071-584 4401).

18 PUDDING RACE

Less fattening than eating the stuff would be to take part in the Christmas Pudding Race which the Cancer Research Campaign is organising in Covent Garden Piazza on December 14. Competitors, who should wear fancy dress, will carry a Christmas pudding and be required to surmount various obstacles *en route*. And, while you're there, Covent Garden is a marvellous place for Christmas shopping.

Hot Christmas Pudding Line, 081-446 4226.

19 CIRCUSES INTOWN

Jeremy Beadle will this year be fulfilling his childhood dream of being a circus ringmaster. He is to be at the centre of Gerry Cottle's new circus spectacular at Wembley from December 20 to January 12, introducing the usual thrilling circus acts: acrobats, horses and what is described as "some show-stopping stuff" from Zira's Nile crocodiles. Also promised is a giant truck called "Big Foot". If mutant mechanical objects are more your style, Archaos—the



Enjoy the thrill of the Silverstone circuit.

circus with monster diggers, jousting cranes, car crushers and other petro-chemical delights—is at Wembley until November 29. For those with a more academic interest in the sawdust ring, Christie's South Kensington is holding a sale of circus memorabilia on November 7 at 2pm.

Wembley Stadium Complex, Wembley, Middx (081-900 1234). Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (071-581 7611).

20 NEIGHBOURHOOD CAROLSINGING

Too often the first two lines of "Away in a Manger", indifferently sung, are followed by a peremptory ring on the doorbell and a demand for money from two scruffy lads who have reached the end of their repertoire. There is nothing to stop you organising a group to provide your neighbourhood with carols sung in perfect harmony from scores lit by old-fashioned lanterns. Ideally you should have some experienced

part-singers as a nucleus, and get together for at least one practice beforehand. Oxford University Press publishes a four-volume set of Carols for Choirs (volume 1 will probably be enough), with easy-to-read four-part harmonies (£7.50 in paperback), or try *Carols Old and New* published by Kevin Mayhew (£9.95 paperback). Put notices on the boards of local libraries, schools, doctors' offices and so on to alert neighbours to when and where your group is coming, and what charity you will be collecting for.

Faith House Bookshop, 7 Tufton Street, London SW1 (071-222 6952). Simon le Jeune Lantern Hire, 18 Sadlers Court, Ferris Road, London SE22 (081-299 3664).

21 ANY OLD TOYS?

The National Children's Home organisation welcomes any old toys for children perhaps less fortunate than yours. So if your offspring can be persuaded to go through their toy-boxes before

Christmas and sort out unwanted games, dolls, teddies and other toys, they will be doing a good turn as well as making space for what will no doubt be coming their way. The charity regrets that it lacks the resources to collect toys, but will gratefully receive items at its head office.

National Children's Home, 85 Highbury Park, London N5 (071-226 2033).

22 A GOOD TIME TO BIKE

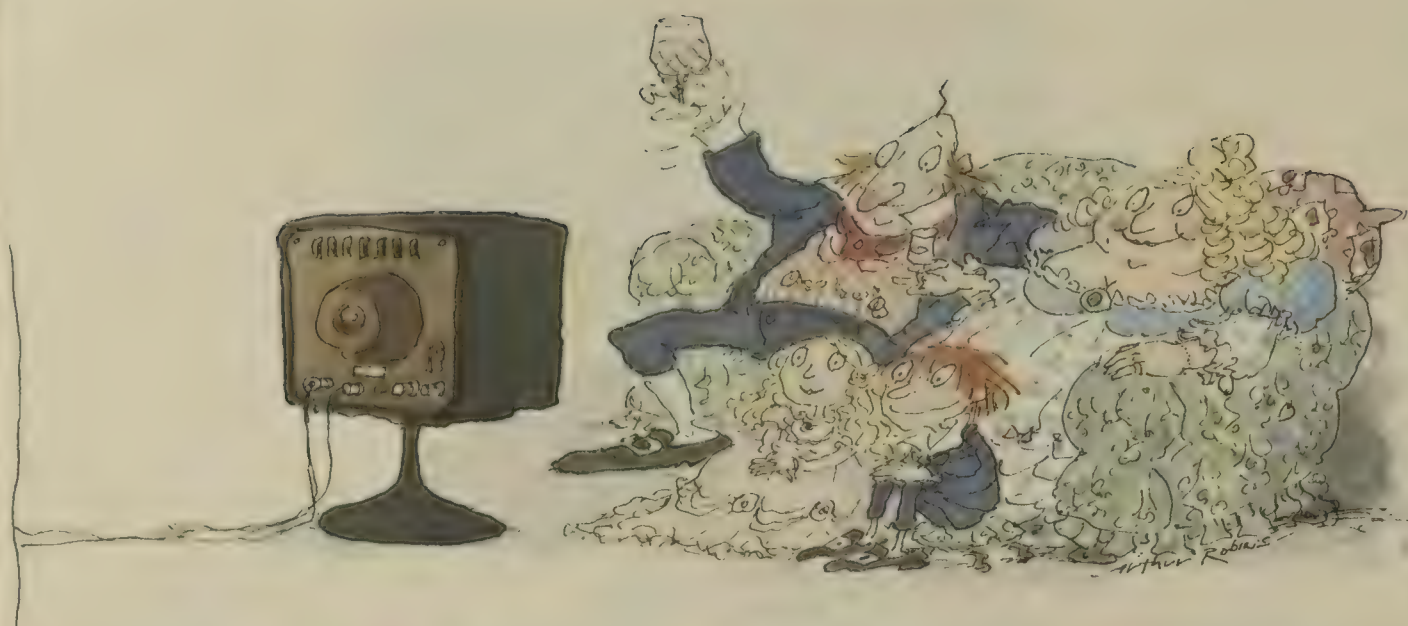
London's streets are delightfully empty during the holiday period. Exploring the capital on two wheels is not only pleasant but wonderful exercise for the post plum-pudding days. Mend-a-bike in Fulham will rent out any number and size of new bikes (£20 per day for a family of four or £75 for seven days). The London Cycling Campaign publishes an excellent booklet called *On Your Bike* with easy-to-read maps and suggested cycle routes. *Mend-a-bike, 4 Effie Road, London SW6 (071-371 5867). London Cycling Campaign, Tress House, Stamford Street, London SE1 (071-928 7220).*

23 DO IT YOURSELF CRACKERS

Tired of plastic whistles and tin thimbles? At Frog Frolics you can buy shells of crackers to assemble and fill with your own gifts. Each kit comes with a snap, a hat and a motto, but you could invent your own, making each one appropriate to the recipient. Frog Frolics also has Charade crackers—each one contains a title to be mimed. *Frog Frolics, 123 Ifield Road, London SW10 (071-370 4358).*



Archaos's brand of circus entertainment at Wembley is anything but traditional.



24 LISTENING TO A BOOK

Words can be relaxing after so much Christmas music, and the Talking Book Club provides poetry, plays or novels read aloud on tape by John Gielgud, Judi Dench and many others—an ideal way to occupy the mind while doing kitchen chores or to pass the time in a traffic jam. Annual subscription £15 (£9 for children), plus £1.15 rental. *Talking Book Club, 19 Guion Road, London SW6 (071-731 6262).*

25 VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS

The old-fashioned Christmas we think of with nostalgia is a largely Victorian invention. You can recreate many of its features: by dressing the family in Victorian clothes, for example, which can be hired from Berman's International (£47 per costume, plus deposit, for Christmas week); by cooking a Victorian meal from *The National Trust Book of Christmas and Festive Day Recipes* by Sara Paston-Williams (Penguin, £4.50); by getting your children to make their own decorations and playing traditional family games selected from the many ideas in *Mrs Beeton's Christmas Book* (Ward Lock, £7.95); and, if you want to complete the picture, by renting a horse-drawn carriage (£300 plus expenses) to take you around London to deliver presents to friends and neighbours in true Victorian style.

Berman's International Costumiers, 40 Camden Street, London NW1 (071-387 0999). Books for Cooks, 4 Blenheim Crescent, London W11 (071-221 1992). Sanders Carriage Co, Paddock End, 32A Latchmere Lane, Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey (081-549 6267).

26 MAGIC AND MUSIC FOR CHILDREN

Children of all ages should delight in the Young Vic Youth Company's production of *The Snow Queen* from November 21 to January 4. The Hans Christian Andersen story of Gerda's quest to rescue her friend Kay, adapted for the stage by Nick Stafford, is a tale of magic, with talking flowers, robbers, magic beasts and, of course, a prince and princess. Special events for seven- to 11-year-olds include painting workshops on November 30 and December 14, and acting workshops with the play's directors and some of the cast on November 26, December 3 and 10. Babar fans should hurry to the Fairfield Halls, Croydon, on December 7 to hear Lionel Blair

narrate the story of how Babar became King of the Elephants, to Poulenc's music, in a children's concert that also includes extracts from *Hansel and Gretel* and *Swan Lake*, as well as carols for audience participation. The ever-popular Ernest Read Concerts for children bring a Christmas flavour to the Festival Hall on December 8 and 15. Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* will be presented in a musical adaptation by Ron Pember at Sadler's Wells from January 7 to February 2.

Young Vic, 66 The Cut, London SE1 (071-928 6363). Fairfield Halls, Park Lane, Croydon (081-688 9291). Festival Hall, South Bank Centre, London SE1 (071-928 8800). Sadler's Wells Theatre, Rosebery Avenue, London EC1 (071-278 8916).

Join in with the carol singing in Trafalgar Square.



27 THE ULTIMATE CHRISTMAS PARTY

If you find festive entertaining too overwhelming Party Planners, run by Lady Elizabeth Anson, can produce willing helpers dressed as serving wenches, elves or Santa's assistants, entertainers and, of course, the food and drink. Mead, mulled wine, canapés, tiny Christmas puddings or yummy little mince pies—you name it. They will even send out the invitations and deal with the replies, and decorate your house. *Party Planners, 56 Ladbroke Grove, London W11 (071-229 9666).*

28 ENCORE PROVENCE

Handcrafted *santons* or Nativity figures from Provence will be on display from December 9 to 19 at the French Institute in South Kensington. Michelle André will give a talk (in French) about the figures on December 12 at 5pm. *French Institute, 17 Queensberry Place, London SW7 (071-589 6211).*

29 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

The usual sparkling illuminations will bring the crowds to throng Regent, Oxford, Jermyn and Bond Streets from mid-November. Take a stroll through these West End thoroughfares and enjoy the decorations, window displays and the lights. If you aim to finish in Trafalgar Square you will find carols being sung around the Christmas tree between 4pm and 10pm in aid of various charities. The giant Norwegian spruce has been an annual gift from the city of Oslo to London since 1947, an expression of goodwill and thanks for Britain's help during the Second World War.

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30 ENTERTAINING ON THE ORIENT-EXPRESS

The luxurious Venice Simplon-Orient-Express train makes an unusual setting for entertaining special clients or business associates to lunch or dinner in its beautifully-restored Pullman carriages. You may not get as far as Venice but, for £160 per person, you can still enjoy champagne and a memorable five-course meal with wines and liqueurs, finishing with crackers and Christmas gifts for all, as the train trundles through the Kent countryside. Lunchtime trips depart at noon and return to Victoria station at 3.45pm; the evening train leaves Victoria at 7.30pm, returning around 11pm. Special flowers or a cake with a personal message can be ordered when making your reservation.

Venice Simplon-Orient-Express, Sea Containers House, 20 Upper Ground, London SE1 (071-928 6000).

31 TREE-DRESSING IDEAS

Inspiration for decorating the Christmas tree may come this year from the Save the Children Fund, which is organising an exhibition of trees decorated by some of the top names in the world of design, fashion and jewellery. The ideas of Paloma Picasso, Garrard, Habitat and many others will be on display in the foyer of the Barbican Centre from December 4 to 10. Later, the trees will be auctioned at a grand dinner.

Save the Children Fund, Mary Datchelor House, 17 Grove Lane, London SE5 (071-703 5400).

32 RAF CHILDREN'S WORKSHOP

The Royal Air Force has come up with an idea for amusing the children during the long holiday. In its museum at Hendon it is organising a two-day workshop for under-14s to come and help build a sledge for the Santa of the 1990s (January 2-3). Family ticket for museum (two adults and two children) £10.

Royal Air Force Museum, Grahame Park Way, Hendon, London NW9 (081-205 2266).



Soar away in a glider over Dunstable Downs.

33 TAKING TO THE AIR

A trial lesson in a helicopter, fixed-wing light aircraft or a glider could be the start of a new way of life for you or someone in your family. The London Gliding Club at Dunstable Downs offers "Air Experience Lessons" with an instructor in a two-seater glider launched either by winch or towed behind a small aircraft and released at 2,000 feet. Either way your first flight will last approximately 20 minutes and cost between £20 and £35. One-to-five-day beginner's courses are available, giving at least five flights a day. Friends and relations are welcome to come and watch pupils and enjoy the view from the clubhouse. At Fairoaks Airport in Chobham you can learn to fly both fixed-wing light aircraft and helicopters. A trial lesson with the Fairoaks Flight Centre on a fixed-wing aircraft costs from £55; Alan Mann Helicopters will initiate new pupils from £140. In both types of aircraft you have a chance to take the controls and experience the heady excitement of flying for yourself. Check age and health restrictions before buying a gift lesson.

London Gliding Club, Dunstable Downs, Beds (0582 663419). Fairoaks Airport, Chobham, Surrey (Fairoaks Flight Centre, fixed-wing aircraft 09905 8075/6; Alan Mann Helicopters Ltd 0276 857471).

34 TREASURE HUNT

Getting everyone up and out after a heavy Christmas meal can be a problem. One incentive might be a treasure hunt over some open ground like Hampstead Heath, with the organiser surrendering each new clue as the teams work out the different stages. If the participants are very young, or if you lack inspiration or the energy to get on the move yourself, a ready-made indoor treasure hunt kit by Gibson's Games is available from Hamley's.

Hamley's, 188 Regent Street, London W1 (071-734 3161).

35 RESTORING THE COOK

A good reward for a Christmas cook could be a day at The Sanctuary. This women-only health spa in the heart of London is a haven of peace and quiet. You can sit and read in the tropical relaxation area, swim, have a sauna or steam bath, use a sunbed, have a facial or an aromatherapy massage. Gift vouchers are available from £25.

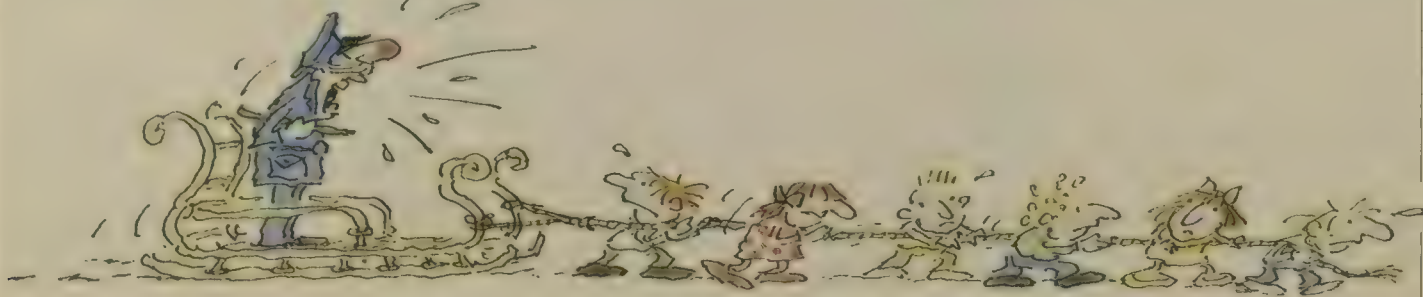
The Sanctuary, 11 Floral Street, London WC2 (071-499 2436).

36 SURVIVAL KIT FOR STAY-AT-HOMES

Some people's Christmas fantasy might be to lounge around at home, eating ultra-delicious food, drinking the best champagne, smoking a great cigar or soaking

in a bath with the most exotic fragrances. Some of London's finest shops will provide you with a luxury survival kit for Christmas. For the man, Turnbull & Asser can provide an Egyptian print, Thai silk dressing gown (£650) and white-on-white herringbone print pyjamas in the finest silk crêpe (£145). For the woman, Fortnum & Mason have a wide selection of silk and satin lingerie by top designers like La Perla, Hanro and Christian Dior. She will be particularly alluring in a navy-and-white spotted silk nightdress (£150) and robe (£205) or cream striped silk jacquard pyjamas (£225), all by Anne Lewin. For traditional delicacies Tom's (Tom Conran's award-winning delicatessen) has Cipriani Pannetone (£12) and Iranian Sevruga Caviar (£41.80 for 125g), which might be washed down with one of the great champagnes from Berry Brothers—1983 Dom Perignon (£60.25 a bottle) or 1985 Louis Roederer Cristal (£58 a bottle). A man might like to smoke the Dunhill Aged cigar, Harvest Crop of 1987, which promises smoking perfection and is available in a range of sizes from the largest Peravia (£5.95 each or £148 for a box of 25) to the smallest Fantinos (£2.95 each or £73.75 for a box of 25). She might prefer to breathe the sweeter fumes of Czech & Speake's Frankincense and Myrrh range of bath products (bath oil £97.10 for 200ml, soap £12.75 for a 75g bar). If the cigar smoke lingers, Floris has a perfume vaporiser with six different fragrances (£8.50 for the complete set, £7.25 refill) to refresh the air.

Turnbull & Asser, 71-72 Jermyn Street, London SW1 (071-930 0502). Fortnum & Mason, 181 Piccadilly, London W1 (071-734 8040). Tom's, 226 Westbourne Grove, London W11 (071-221 8818). Berry Bros & Rudd, 3 St James's Street, London SW1 (071-839 9033). Alfred Dunhill, 30 Duke Street, London SW1 (071-499 9566). Czech & Speake, 39c Jermyn Street, London SW1 (071-439 0216). Floris, 89 Jermyn Street, London SW1 (071-930 2885).



37 COUNTRY GETAWAY

Many country hotels offer exciting and imaginative packages to suit the tastes of their Christmas guests. The Welcombe Hotel in Stratford-upon-Avon caters for the whole family, including dogs, in a five-day holiday starting on Christmas Eve. Champagne receptions, a dance for adults, games and high teas for the children, a treasure hunt on Boxing Day and a fun nine-hole golf tournament make up some of the activities available. Prices start at £595 for adults and £395 for children, all inclusive. If you seek the sensation of being in a luxurious private house then take yourself off to Llangoe Hall in the heart of the Wye Valley. The hospitality is superb, with general manager Tom Ward greeting guests at the front door as if welcoming them to his own home, the emphasis being on discreet luxury and attention to detail. There are a few general Christmassy activities available, but it is easy to avoid them and settle in a corner with a good book or explore the surrounding countryside. The hotel offers clay-pigeon shooting, carol singing, a horse and trap to take you to the local village pub, a Santa with presents for all on Christmas Day but, above all, superb food with organic local meat and vegetables. Prices start at £440 per person for three nights, all inclusive. Farther afield, you will get a real Irish welcome at Adare Manor in County Limerick, Ireland. Only 40 minutes from Shannon Airport, the hotel is set in 900 acres of rolling countryside and offers a tempting Christmas package, with lots of delicious food and drink. Father Christmas brings presents at breakfast on Christmas morning, followed by games and high teas for the children and a dinner-dance for the grown-ups. Use of the indoor swimming-pool, gym and sauna are indoor attractions, with fishing, golf, riding, clay-pigeon shooting and archery for the outdoor crowd. Rates from tea on December 24 to breakfast on December 27 start at IR£320 per person, all inclusive.

For *ILN* readers there is a special Christmas break on offer at the South Lodge Hotel in West Sussex, with four nights for the price of three. See page 53.

Welcombe Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwicks (0789 295252). Llangoe Hall, Llyswn, Brecon, Powys (0874 754525). Adare Manor, Adare, County Limerick, Ireland (010 353 61 396566).

38 STAY HOME AND PLAY MURDER

Murder is one of the longest-lasting and most popular of party games. A de luxe version for six players, called "Death in St James's Park", is on sale this year at Hamley's (£14.99). Each person is given an identity, and you spend the day working out who did the murder. Serve a non-Christmas meal and lots of non-Christmas drink and you may escape Christmas unscathed for another year. On the other hand you may be dead.

Hamley's, 188 Regent Street, London W1 (071-734 3161).

39 BREAK AT THE BERKELEY

You don't need to leave London to have a luxurious night away from home responsibilities. At the Berkeley Hotel in Knightsbridge you can spend the night, indulge yourself at either a special Christmas lunch or dinner, enjoy a bottle of champagne in your room, open a gift from Tiffany's with your breakfast and then, to blow the cobwebs away, use the hotel's health club or play a complimentary round of golf at Wentworth. £350 for two.

The Berkeley Hotel, Wilton Place, London SW1 (071-235 6000).

40 CHAUFFEUR-DRIVEN

Hiring a car with chauffeur overcomes parking problems and the hazards of the breathalyser. Camelot Barthropp will provide a car and driver for as long as you need one evening or the entire Christmas period. Rates in London start at £16.50 an hour for a Ford Granada, but the company also has Jaguars, Mercedes and Rolls-Royces. Miles & Miles can take the strain out of your shopping by providing the comfort of a Volvo or Mercedes whose uniformed driver will cheerfully jostle with others to get you to the shops of your choice. Cars are also available for evenings and for the Christmas period. Rates start at £71.50 for a half

day's hire of a chauffeur-driven Volvo, evening rates from £48. If you prefer the idea of using your own car, Duty Driver will provide a uniformed and experienced chauffeur for a flat rate of £9 an hour (plus VAT), night or day, weekday or weekend, Christmas Day included.

Camelot Barthropp, 11 Headfort Place, London SW1 (071-235 0234). Miles & Miles, 18 Peter-sham Mews, London SW7 (071-584 9295). Duty Driver, 58 Coltman House, Welland Street, London SE10 (0734 320570).

41 ARTISTIC GETAWAYS

Some exciting Christmas tours are being arranged by Travel for the Arts, including one to Venice, when that city will be at its most beautiful—empty, and its air cold but crystal clear. The tour offers seven days of sightseeing and music, with a visit to Palladian villas in the Veneto. Musical highlight is a performance of Verdi's *Don Carlo* in La Fenice opera house. The cost is from £755 per person. Germany has always taken Christmas seriously, and on the popular O'Tannenbaum tour to Hanover you will be taken sightseeing, have a festive Christmas Eve dinner and overnight stay in the attractive town of Goslar, and attend performances of *Aida*, *Hansel and Gretel* and/or the ballet *Romeo and Juliet* at the Hanover State Opera House, and a carol concert with the Hanover Boys' Choir. Price for seven days from £750 per person. If you want

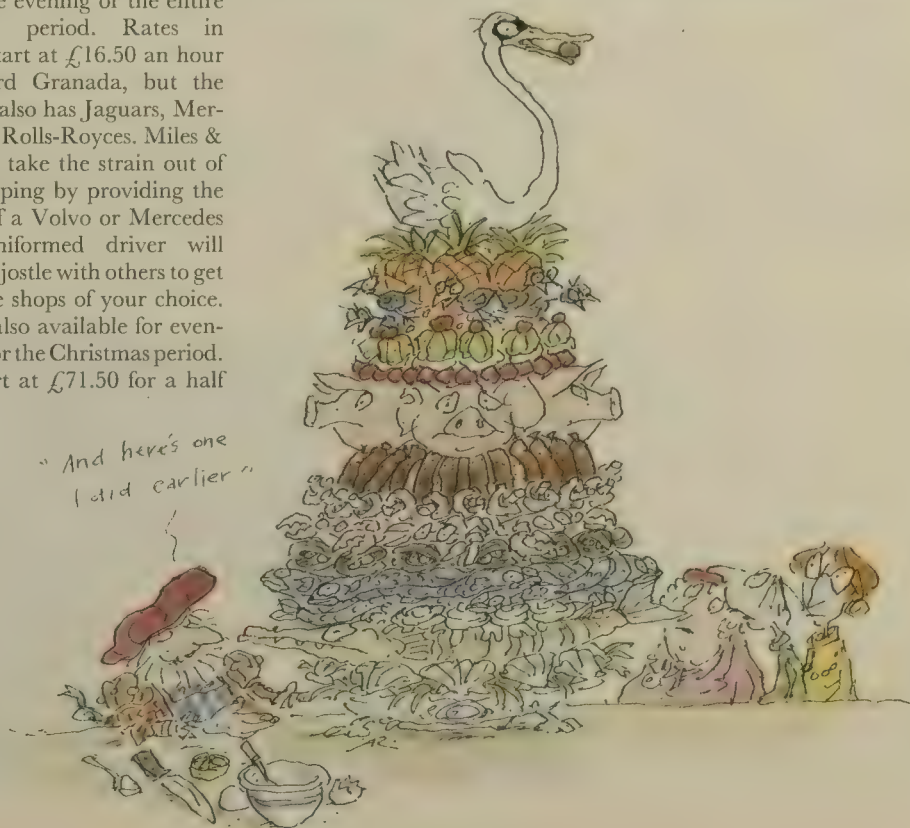
to end Mozart's bicentenary year on a high note you could spend Christmas in Salzburg. The eight-day itinerary (December 20 to 27) includes seven nights in the four-star Hotel Elefant, expeditions, sleigh rides, carols in the chapel of Oberndorf—where "Silent Night" was first sung in 1818—and a five-course Christmas Eve dinner. Among the musical highlights are *The Magic Flute* at the Landestheater and a Christmas Day concert at the Mozarteum. Prices start at £795 per person. Shorter festive holidays offered by Travel for the Arts include New Year in Paris (December 28-January 1) and New Year's Eve at La Scala (December 28-January 1).

Travel for the Arts, 117 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 (071-483 4466).

42 TUDOR KITCHEN IN ACTION

Hampton Court re-opened its kitchens in May and between December 27 and 31 there will be a chance to see them in use. Peter Brears, director of the Leeds Museum, will give demonstrations of Tudor cookery, in costume and using the utensils of the period, preparing and talking about many Tudor dishes, including potage and hot spiced ale. There is much else to see in the Palace, including the newly-restored state apartments, and the Palace shops offer a wide range of unusual Christmas presents.

Hampton Court Palace, East Molesey, Surrey (081-977 7222).





43 CHILDREN'S PARTY SPECIAL

For a party with a difference, treat your children to a mobile zoo featuring a blue-tongued lizard, Snoopy the fruit bat, a bird-eating spider and many more strange and exotic small animals, some of which can be cuddled and stroked. The children's faces can be painted to look like reindeer, elves, fairies or almost anything else. You can even have Santa on his sledge, drawn by four real reindeer, handing out presents and giving the little ones rides around your square or in the park. Packages start from £500.

Influence Limited, 081-299 3664.

44 HOGMANAY AWAY

The Scots know how to celebrate the New Year. This year you can enjoy a new Hogmanay experience aboard the Royal Scotsman, a privately-owned train which carries 32 passengers in utter luxury and comprises an observation car, two dining cars, four sleeping cars and, of course, a steam engine. For this trip you join the train at Birmingham International station and set off north through Derbyshire, Yorkshire and, steam-hauled, along the Settle-Carlisle line (one of the most scenic railways in England) into Scotland. In your five days north of the Border, there are private visits to Blairquhan, Culzean Castle and Strachur House home of author Sir Fitzroy Maclean and his culinary expert wife. On New Year's Eve guests are offered clay-pigeon shooting or walking at Dunkeld House before travelling south of Edinburgh to Manderston. The tour finishes here, at the home of

Lord and Lady Palmer, who will host a traditional Hogmanay celebration. You can then be transported either north to Edinburgh or south to Newcastle. The dates of this trip are December 27-January 1, and the cost is £3,300 per person, all inclusive. There is also a Christmas tour in England, highlights of which include visits to Highclere Castle, Grafton Manor (to attend a Christmas Eve service), Stratford-upon-Avon and Haworth with a Christmas Day service in Worcester Cathedral and Christmas lunch in the Cotswolds. *Royal Scotsman Tours, Sloane Square House, Holbein Place, London SW1 (071-730 9600).*

45 A DAY AT THE RACES

Kempton Park is London's most friendly racecourse—"one of the best to ride on" according to Lester Piggott, and certainly one of the easiest for punters to move about on—and on Boxing Day it holds one of its liveliest meetings, which includes the King George

VI Steeplechase. There are also race meetings elsewhere on Boxing Day (details from the Jockey Club), but Kempton is the place to go if it is within range.

Kempton Park Racecourse, Sunbury-on-Thames, Surrey (0932 782292).

The Jockey Club, 42 Portman Square, London W1 (071-486 4921).

46 MESSIAH FROM SCRATCH

To take part in this grand singalong is a dream come true for would-be choral performers. You can join a choir of thousands in the Albert Hall and sing Handel's oratorio under the baton of Sir David Willcocks (musical director of the Bach Choir). When applying for tickets, you state your voice register (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) and you are then seated in the appropriate part of the hall. All you need is a score, the ability to read music, to follow a conductor and a pair of strong lungs. Messiah from Scratch has become so popular that the only certain way of getting in is via the direct-mailing list. This year's performance is sold out, so book now for next year's, and for the Verdi Requiem from Scratch, which is planned for May, 1992 (also to be conducted by Sir David Willcocks).

Mailing list: Tuesday Partnership, PO Box 323, London W4 3TY.

47 BOXING DAY MEETS

There are many ways to enjoy traditional Boxing Day meets. You can show up and just enjoy the spectacle, you can follow the hunt on foot (which may prove physically quite demanding, as well as chilly and wet), and you can also, if you are a keen rider, hire a horse and join the hue and cry. Most of the smaller hunts allow non-members to join in free on Boxing Day and New Year's Day, but ask the hunt secretary

first. Traditional Boxing Day meets near London include the Old Surrey and Burstow Hunt at the Olde Felbridge Hotel, East Grinstead (10.45am), the Vale of Aylesbury at Charlbury Common, near Chesham, Bucks (11am), and that of the Garth and South Berkshire to be held at Mortimer Fairground near Reading (11am).

Horse & Hound magazine publishes a list of Boxing Day meets in its pre-Christmas issues.

48 WALKING IT OFF

Walking is a good way of balancing the indulgences of Christmas. London has many parks and larger "lungs" such as Hampstead Heath, Blackheath, Greenwich and Richmond where oxygen can be replenished and muscles exercised. For something more mentally stimulating there are walks with archaeologists or, on December 15, a Christmas walk exploring the London of Dickens. On the following Sunday an organised walk traces the history of Christmas traditions through the City of London. All organised by Citisights. For those wanting to go farther afield, the National Trust and the Ramblers' Association have arranged a week of Christmas walks in many parts of the country, starting on Boxing Day. *Citisights, 213 Brooke Road, London E5 (071-806 4325).* *National Trust, 36 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1 (071-222 9251); send a large stamped addressed envelope for details.*

49 NEW YEAR'S DAY SPECTACULAR

January 1 can be a bit flat after the excitement of Christmas and the excesses of New Year's Eve. Round off the festive season by following the Lord Mayor of Westminster's parade of marching bands, cheerleaders, floats, horse-drawn carriages and costumed characters from Berkeley Square via Piccadilly, Regent Street and Oxford Street to Marble Arch. The bands move on to the Albert Hall to give a concert at 2pm.

Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, London SW7 (071-589 8212).

50 RECYCLING THE RUBBISH

Getting rid of all the Christmas debris is always a problem, both practically and environmentally. If you don't know already, find out from your local council where to take your paper, bottles, cans and other recyclable waste, and check when depots are open □

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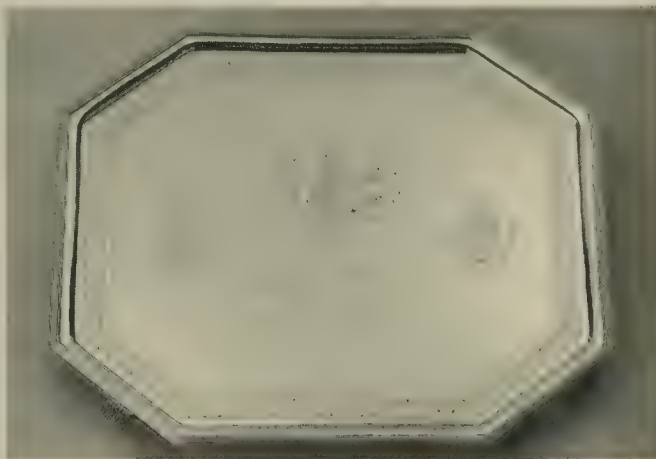


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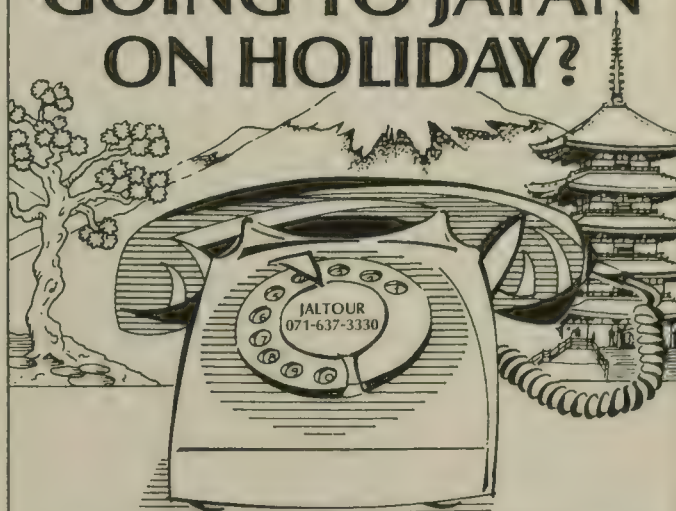
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CHRISTMAS PUDDINGS

A short story by Bel Mooney.

Alis thought he was the ugliest man she had ever seen. She nudged her mother and pointed him out, suppressing a giggle. A mountain of a man, with a huge beer belly, and fleshy arms tattooed with snakes and hearts, he stood at the hotel bar alone, drinking beer. This was his third large tankard. She watched, fascinated, as he threw back his head to drain the glass, his fleshy jowls quivering, his throat jerking up and down like a freshly-killed chicken. Then he banged the glass on the bar and nodded at the barman.

"Same again, mate," he said. The barman did not understand the words, but knew what was required.

"He is English, Mama," whispered Alis, staring at the man's denim jeans and the fancy, Western-style blue shirt stretched over his stomach.

"You should speak to him then, Alis," said her mother. "You can practise a little—and no one will see you here. It will be all right in Mamaia."

But Alis just shook her head, sipping her sickly-sweet cherry juice, never removing her gaze from the fat Englishman—now wiping drops of beer off the small moustache which fringed his lip incongruously, like a tiny hedge in the centre of a vast, bare, undulating landscape. He saw her looking, and winked one small, piggy eye. Embarrassed, Alis looked down and talked to her mother about soap.

A few minutes later there was a sound of argument from the bar, and she looked across again. The Englishman was trying to protest about something, but the barman shrugged insolently. Alis's mother looked reproachfully at her. "You should go and help, Alis," she said. "After all, he is a guest in our country."

"He's a tourist, Mama," said Alis shortly; nevertheless she rose, went across to the bar and stood next to the man, who towered over her. "Excuse me, can I help you?"

"Oh—someone who speaks English, thank God for that! Look, I had four beers, right? And I gave him 20,000 lei, and look what he give us back!" He spread out the dirty, crumpled notes with contempt.

It was not the English Alis had learnt at school, then later from books and from her nightly tuning to the BBC World Service, nor that which she used from time to time in her work as a technical translator in a chemicals factory. She found his hard northern accent difficult to understand and, in any case, was distracted by the tiny emerald stud he wore in one ear. It was bizarre—by its smallness and

prettiness emphasising the plainness of its wearer.

"You have overcharged him," she said coldly to the barman. "Why should you care?" asked the man. "He can afford it look at him. He's a rich, fat tourist. Maybe you think you could be lucky there, get some presents..." And he leered at her.

Alis glanced across at her mother, a small, shabby figure who was watching her proudly, and knew she must not let her down. "I'm sorry," she said to the Englishman, "he is not a very nice person, but not all Rumanians are like him. Don't worry, I will speak to him again." Then she turned back to the bar and told the young man that she would report him unless he gave the tourist the correct money. "I know the right people," she added, in a vaguely threatening tone, and was rewarded by seeing a slight shadow of fear flicker across his eyes. Nobody *knew*. You could at least make use of that fact.

Two minutes later the Englishman had crammed himself into the plastic chair next to Alis's mother. The barman glowered at them.

"Trevor Bates."

"I am Alis, and this is my mother, Madame... er... Meeses (she stumbled over this) Corianu."

He put out an enormous paw.

"My daughter taught herself English. She is a very clever girl," said Alis's mother, in Rumanian, nodding at Alis to translate. She did so, blushing.

"I'll say!" said Trevor, slapping his knee. "And I tell you, if I lived in a God-forsaken hole like this even I'd teach meself a language, and try and get out."

Alis glanced around, but the bar was empty and the barman had disappeared. Suddenly she felt exhilarated—actually talking to a foreigner, using her English gingerly, as someone might walk for the first time, on new, stiff artificial limbs.

"But it is impossible for us to get out," she said, smiling at him with some pity for his ignorance. "And if I can ask you something, Mr Bates..."

"Trev, call me Trev. That's easy to say, right?"

"... Why did you come to Rumania? I think it is not a nice place for you."

"Dunno really. I was wondering what to do, and all me mates at work, they was going to Spain, like. So I thought, let's have a change. And I sees this package in the travel agent's and I thinks, where's that when it's

about? It says Mamaia is the Rumanians' holiday playground, or some such rubbish. Then they tells me the beer's dead cheap and so here I am!"

Alis understood little of this. He spoke rapidly, nodding his head so that the emerald stud twinkled at her. "Ask him what he does, Alis—his job," said Mrs Corianu, gazing at Trevor Bates intently.

"I work in a factory—making Christmas puddings," he said, "in Nottingham—that's up north in England."

"Christmas... puddings?"

"Aye. Don't you have them? Can't say I blame you, can't stand the things meself. See too much of 'em. It's a sort of cake thing, a pudden', you eat on Christmas Day, after the bird, like. You set fire to it then eat it. Waste of good brandy I always say."

"Bird? Brandy?" repeated Alis faintly, imagining a conflagration at the table of her most precious imaginings, which groaned with food. Unconsciously she slipped out her tongue for a second, feeling hungry. Trevor Bates read the look. "Hey, would you like a bit of chocolate? You can't get that stuff, can you? I'll go and fetch some from me room."

Chocolate! Alis felt suddenly that this was the most significant day of her whole life. "But not here," she said, glancing around. When she translated for her mother, a fixed expression settled on the old woman's face. "Tell him you'll meet him outside, Alis. I shall go to our room. Better that you are alone with him."

The beach was dark and empty. In the distance, to the north, a livid light hung over the gigantic superphosphates factories of Navodari. The waves made a peaceful lapping sound as they walked along, Alis in a reverent ecstasy, rolling the melted milk chocolate round her mouth, feeling it coat her teeth before letting it slip slowly down her throat. Trevor sat down, puffing as he lowered himself, and patted the sand beside him. Alis knelt warily, dreading the move she saw as inevitable, yet wondering (with that same fascination that had made her stare at him so avidly) what it would be like to feel that bulk upon her.

But he talked to her. He told her about Nottingham, pointing to Navodari and saying that it made him feel at home. He described Robinson's Christmas pudding factory, where tons of flour and sugar, nuts and flavourings were churned in huge vats, until the air itself seemed sticky, and the cloying smell of Christmas pudding clung so



tightly to your hair and clothes that no amount of soap could wash it out.

"Soap," said Alis, dreamily.

"Aye? What about it?"

She hesitated. "I wonder if... it is a terrible thing to ask, but do you think...?"

"Come on, lass, out with it!"

"If you have some soap with you, some English soap, then maybe you could give it to me when you go back?"

He threw back his head and laughed, and Alis thought the ground vibrated beneath her. "I'll do better than that, love. They told us to bring a bit of chocolate and mebbe a bit of soap, to give away like, or use to bribe folk, and so I've a whole pack of lavender soap in me bedroom. It smells right nice. I'll give it you in the morning..." (he nudged her in the ribs, and she waited for the inevitable suggestion, to which she knew she would agree, for soap, for chocolate, even for the forbidden delight of talking to this peculiar foreigner about Christmas puddings) "...if you'll come for a swim with me tomorrow. Eh?"

Suddenly tears filled her eyes at his innocence and she nodded, without speaking. "That's that then! Enjoy the choccy, did you? I can't stand sweet things—me. Must be because of the puddings. Here, take some up to your mum."

Next morning he detached himself from the rest of the tour and, indifferent to the curious looks from Rumanian and English holidaymakers alike, sat at their table. After breakfast they went to the beach, Alis sprawling by her mother's ramshackle rented deck-chair, very conscious of Trevor's gaze. She knew she looked pretty, despite her old-fashioned, shabby black costume and the freckles which joined in patches here and there on her face and chest, giving her a slightly blotchy look. Her hair was long and sandy-brown, and, knowing he was looking, she tossed it over one shoulder, so that it hung in an elegant, curving question-mark.

"You're thin for a Rumanian," he said. It was a pity, thought Alis, that the same could not be said of him. Sitting, in his electric-blue swimming shorts, he was a terrible sight, his belly creased into countless pink folds so that the navel was lost completely or squinted out now and then, like a deformed eye. A little waterfall of hair trickled down from the quivering stomach, disappearing beneath the band of his shorts, and his hairy legs were so thin and white it was impossible to imagine them supporting his weight.

"Swim?" he asked, and for a moment Alis wanted to refuse, ashamed (even though there was no one familiar but her mother to see) to walk beside such a man. But she rose meekly and followed him into the waves, surprised to discover, as his head rose streaming from the water and he slipped over onto his back, that within this other element he possessed some grace.

They spent each day together. Alis was aware of how often her mother left them alone and knew why. She resigned herself to the fact that she would, in the end, go to his room and let him do what he wished. It would be worth it for the presents and the cigarettes, and, in any case, he wasn't a bad man. She knew that.

When the moment came it was not as she had feared. He ran his hands over her body

for ages, handling her delicately as if she were something precious, and then fumbled with a condom as if he were unused to the exercise. When at last he rolled on top, it was with an aching gentleness, as if he were afraid of breaking her. Soon, very soon, it was over, and she felt him weeping quietly into her shoulder. She said, "Please don't cry, I like you very much," over and over again, as he sobbed incoherently, telling her that at home he could never get a woman, and that the girls in the factory all laughed at him, and his mates teased him for not being able to pull birds, and he had to go with toms from time to time... and so, "Thank you little Alis, thank you," he mumbled, kissing her neck in a frenzy. "Birds? Toms?" she thought, as her right leg went dead beneath him.

At the end of the week Alis and her mother

The future
seemed to shape
itself into a
vast supermarket
of chocolate

were due to take the bus and return to their village, 10 miles from Bucharest. With another week to go, Trevor was downcast, saying he would be lonely without them. He asked if he could hire a car for the day and drive them home, and they accepted. Alis felt reckless now. She knew she should not have been seen so much with this foreigner, and certainly should not allow him to visit her home, and yet she felt no fear. She knew it was all moving steadily towards its predestined end, with her mother's collusion. When Alis had returned, the last four nights, to their shared room very late after having sex, she pretended to be asleep. In the morning that fixed, determined look was more intense than ever. "This is your chance, Alis," she said, and although Alis shook her head vehemently and told her not to be absurd, she knew it too.

Trevor Bates drove them home. Alis felt ashamed of the dingy block and the small, mean apartment she shared with her mother and two older brothers. As soon as they arrived, Mrs Corianu went out to queue for bread, leaving them alone. Trevor asked if he could stay for a couple of days. "But your hotel room?" Alis protested.

He shrugged. "It's already paid for. Any road, I want to stay here with you." And he looked at her with a sentimental, longing expression almost savage in its intensity.

Alis hesitated. "But you see... it is very difficult, Trev. If you stay with us... well, there could be trouble." He asked what sort of trouble and she felt impatient with him for not understanding, despite all she had told him on those beach walks. "People are always watching," she explained, "and if we have a

foreigner to stay... well... it is not permitted. He does not like that."

"What, old Cowkeskoo, or whatever his name is? None of 'is bloody business, is it? Raving nutter, he is."

Despite her anxiety Alis giggled, then put a finger on his lips. To her astonishment Trevor seized it and almost bent it backwards with the ferocity of his kisses. "Alis, I want you to marry me," he mumbled. "I know I'm not a clever bloke, not so clever as you, love, but I'll look after you, and take you away from here, and you'll have everything you want, at home." All this was said in a rush, and then he drew one of her fingers into his mouth, licking and sucking at it.

By the time Mrs Corianu returned, her daughter was engaged to be married. As the older woman stood on tiptoe to embrace her future son-in-law she met Alis's eyes. Then, as Trevor stood there smiling foolishly, she turned to her daughter and said, "This is what I wanted, Alis. You have a chance of freedom now—and he isn't a bad man." "No, Mother," said Alis.

When her brothers came home from work they were amazed to find the fat Englishman filling their tiny sitting-room. Despite the Kent cigarettes the foreigner gave them, Mircea told his sister that she was crazy. But Daniel shook his head and agreed with their mother that this was her chance. "If they will give you permission to marry," he added, voicing, for the first time, the fear Alis had not dared to acknowledge. "It will be hard, Alis, you know that."

She nodded, and Trevor watched them all, not understanding, the foolish, happy grin glued in place. They toasted their engagement in *tuica*, and that night Trevor slept in his car outside the flats. The following evening he returned to Mamaia, after a day spent planning. "I'll come back at Christmas," he promised, "and bring you the ring. And if you've got all the paperwork going, like, they won't make any trouble, will they?"

Alis shook her head, but dubiously. She wondered, in her heart, if she wanted the permission to marry to be refused. But the smell of lavender soap was on her hands, and he talked of a diamond ring, and the future shaped itself into a vast supermarket, stacked with chocolate and bananas. He cut a hole in a piece of paper to measure her finger and found out her size in clothes. So she promised to write to him and reflected that "I love you" is easy to say when it is in a foreign language.



"How did you meet this Englishman?" She told them, sweat trickling down from her armpits, despite the freezing temperature of the room. "Did he give you dollars?" The innuendo was unmistakable, and its effect on Alis was to replace fear by anger. "I am not a prostitute," she said. "Why do you want to marry a foreigner? Why do you not want to marry a Rumanian?..."

And so it went on, time after time, until Alis despaired and wept in her mother's arms. Trevor's short letters seemed more and more precious to her, for she half-expected him to forget her. The engagement seemed like a dream, for her hand was bare and the soap had all been used up. She wrote back letters

that were longer than his, for she had to tell him of the frustration and the humiliation of those interviews with the officials. "I think of you often, but it is hard for me to believe that we will be married," she wrote. As the autumn passed, and winter settled on them, she even began to forget what he looked like, transforming him, in the haziness of memory, into someone taller and less ugly. The women at work envied the glamour of her prospects and spoke to her less and less, as if she was set aside, isolated by her good fortune. But Alis had always been solitary and it did not worry her. She began to long for Christmas.

Trevor arrived, on December 23, with an enormous suitcase, which even he could hardly carry. At first she gasped at his appearance: in the padded black anorak he looked fatter than ever, and his face was raw and cold. For a second she was dismayed and yet the smile was so tender in that shapeless, ugly face that suddenly she felt ashamed. After all, he was not a bad man, and he had come back. For her. They stood shyly, looking at each other, bumping awkwardly as they turned to go into the sitting-room.

The suitcase contained wonders Alis had not dreamt of. He brought scented soap, bubble bath, a whole range of cosmetics, fine tights and (best of all) three pairs of blue jeans for Alis and her brothers. There were tins of tuna-fish and ham, packets of biscuits and dozens of bars of chocolate. Those were not the Christmas presents, he said, they must save the wrapped parcels until the day. Then he gave her a tiny box, and for a long time Alis gazed at the little diamond solitaire before slipping it onto her finger. "It's beautiful," she whispered. "So are you, pet," he murmured, shuffling his feet.

At last he pulled a carrier bag from the bottom of the case and thrust it into Mrs Corianu's arms. It contained a small turkey and a Robinson's Christmas pudding in a cardboard box decorated with a coaching scene. Alis and her mother looked at each other and then both started to cry.

That night they lay in her tiny, ice-cold bedroom, Alis conscious of the squeakiness of her single bed and the thinness of the walls. When he had finished, he rolled off her with a sigh and heaved himself onto the floor. "I'm going to buy us a king-sized bed with a padded headboard," he promised, before falling asleep. Alis lay awake, listening to the gentle, rhythmical sound of his snoring. Then, very quietly, she slipped from her bed, took the heavy blankets her mother had left folded in the corner, and covered him up.

Trevor's actual Christmas presents were magnificent. There was a heavy cardigan-jacket, trimmed with leather, for each of the brothers, a real leather handbag for Mrs Corianu, and for Alis a purple blouse, a necklace of freshwater pearls, a glamorous nightie and negligé set (far too flimsy for her flat, but that did not matter) and a set of scarlet underwear that made Daniel and Mircea grin and Alis blush. Trevor stood, beaming that foolish grin, as they carefully unpeeled the shiny paper and exclaimed; and when they offered two small, plainly-wrapped gifts for him, he held up a little carved wooden box and bottle of *tuica* with unfeigned delight. Tears came into Alis's eyes. Shame, she thought.

After the turkey, served simply with potatoes and cabbage, Trevor announced he was going to "do the pud", and disappeared into the kitchen, carrying a half-bottle of brandy. He came back, holding a plate high. It seemed to Alis the most beautiful thing she had ever seen: blue flames licked the sticky brown mound, turning the plate into a sea of flickering light. They ate, and toasted each other in *tuica*. Trevor said he had never enjoyed a Christmas pudding before that moment. "The thing about it," he said, regarding his spoonful, "is -- it don't look very much in the box, but then . . . it has its moment, like."

Alis giggled, slightly drunk, and raised her glass. "To . . . Christmas puddings," she said. "*Noroc!*" chorused her brothers, without understanding.



Trevor went back to England, and the flat seemed colder and emptier than ever without his bulk to fill it. "Next time I come, we'll be wed," he had promised, but Alis did not believe him. "They'll never give me the permission," she said sadly, but he squashed her in a bear hug and told her not to be so daft. "Daft?" she said. It was that new word he had taught her.

He went back to Nottingham and to more teasing from his friends at the factory. They had not believed in his pretty Rumanian girl ("What Trev? He got drunk more like and screwed an old slag, and thought he'd got lucky!"), but when he came back they realised it must be true.

"Where's she live, Trev? Dracula's Castle?"

"Watch out for her teeth, mate!"

"Watch where she puts her mouth, you randy fat bugger!"

Trevor grinned amiably, proud of himself. And systematically he started to redecorate the maisonette he had lived in alone since his parents died. He was lonely no longer; he imagined Alis in the kitchen, making a stew, and them watching television in the lounge, and then, in the bedroom, making love, and he shuddered with longing. It would happen, he knew it, sure as Christmas.

Every two weeks he wrote to her, telling her about the new dining-room suite he had bought, and the settee, and the video with remote control, knowing that to her these ordinary things would seem miraculous, that she would translate his letters to her family with cries of joy.

Yet, in truth, the letters depressed Alis. She

wrote back dutifully, but this man in the far-away country with all its supermarkets and fast cars and plentiful clothes shops, and where people could do and think and write as they liked, receded further and further as the weeks passed. It was terrifying, unreal, to imagine herself sitting on the velvet settee, pressing a button to make the pictures change. She found herself praying that "they" would refuse her permission to marry a foreigner. Her mother, knowing all this, berated her for her foolishness, then wept. "Alis, little Alis, this is your chance. Your father would have been so proud . . ."

Alis Corianu received her permission to marry in April, nine months after she had met Trevor. Nobody could believe it; the news spread in and out of the flats on the sprawling estate in a day or two, so that she was pointed out by strangers to their children as the woman who was going to live in England. Inexorably, like someone in a dream, Alis was drawn along—passive. Sometimes in dreams she was imprisoned by the Securitate, and then the interrogator turned into Trevor, huge and fat and ugly, bearing down on her. She quailed. Still, the letter was sent to her fiancé and a date fixed. A June wedding. The women at her workplace were silent with envy and rage.

Mrs Corianu sewed a dress of white cotton, trimmed with nylon lace, and Alis made her own veil. Often she would feel tears trickle down her cheeks, but was careful not to let her mother see. "I shall never see my family again," she thought, but when once she tried to say this to Mircea, he shook his head warningly, looking at the kitchen, where Mrs Corianu was making *locana*.

The weather grew hot. When Trevor arrived he looked grotesque in a pale-blue, slightly shiny summer suit—sweating under the weight of the enormous suitcase. Again he had brought soaps, chocolates, tinned food, whisky and cigarettes. "My God, my God, that my daughter should have been so lucky to meet such a kind man!" exclaimed Mrs Corianu. "It's only *things*, Mama, and he may not be so kind once he has me for ever," snapped Alis.

Trevor looked from one to the other, without understanding, puzzled by the contrast between the ecstasy on the face of his future mother-in-law, and his bride's evident irritation. But Mircea said something to her, softly, and she looked up at Trevor, making herself smile. "I think I am a little nervous," she explained. "Don't worry, pet, you'll soon be Mrs Bates," he said.

The wedding passed in a haze of sweet "champagne", fizzing red in the darker red of Mrs Corianu's best wineglasses, followed by the inevitable *tuica*. The civil ceremony was short; Alis had schooled Trevor in what to do, and so nothing went wrong. Then neighbours and relatives crammed the tiny flat to eat sweet and savoury pastries, cold pork and tomatoes, and to drink and drink—until Alis thought she would die with the heat and the noise, her head swimming and her face burning. And Trevor with his arm draped hotly around her, calling her "Mrs Bates". It was terrible.

She slipped away and walked down the seven flights of stairs (the lift was broken),

standing in her wedding dress at the door to their block, looking out over the rutted wasteland around her to factory chimneys smoking in the distance. Nearby, a small girl was playing with a battered, home-made cart, in which she had placed an ancient plastic doll with a dirty face, wrapped lovingly in a scrap of cloth. She stared at Alis solemnly. "Are you married?" she asked. Alis nodded. "I want to be married," said the child, "and have a real baby." Alis looked down at the pathetic toys, and at her wizened little face, then took a deep breath and ran back upstairs. In the flat, puffing, she went across to Trevor and tucked her arm in his.

Mrs Corianu, Mircea and Daniel borrowed a car to drive them to the airport for the ceremonial farewell. "*La revedere, Mama—te iubesc*," whispered Alis, clinging to her language, "goodbye . . . I love you—*te iubesc*."

"I know we'll see you again, little Alis," said Mrs Corianu, through tears, "because one day all this will be over, and we shall come to see you in England."

"Yes, Mama, of course," sobbed Alis, thinking, "It will never be over. I shall never see them again"—the dead refrain that thrummed in her head on the four-hour flight to Manchester, in the old, vibrating TAROM turbo-prop, "... over . . . over . . . over . . . over . . ." again and again, until she felt dizzy. Trevor did not attempt to cheer her, except that every now and then he would say, "Hallo, Mrs Bates," and squeeze her knee.



"She's not bad, is she? Lucky bastard!"

"Who'd have thought old Trev could pull a bird like that."

"Oh, aye, but you know why she married him, don't you? They got *nothing* over there. She's laughing now. Sticks out a mile."

"An' I bet it does, too!"

That was the conversation when Trevor and Alis left the pub, the introductions done.

Nottingham was beautiful, terrifying; Alis felt dwarfed by its roads and precincts, and by the crowds who wore trainers, jeans, and T-shirts with slogans. She clutched Trevor as he led her into all the main stores, offering to buy her anything she wanted. Awed, Alis shook her head. But in the supermarket she heaped a trolley. She pictured her mother, a stooped, brown figure queuing for bread and trying to eke out the cooking-oil ration, and knew she must not let her down. The fruit bowl was always full of bananas, and gradually Alis became accustomed to having so much, and no longer had to rush down the road to buy a bar of chocolate the moment her taste buds instructed. She told Trevor she liked this new life, and even said "I love you" often enough to convince him. In English, of course.

She began to put on weight, and Trevor said it suited her. She learned to make shepherd's pie and his favourite dishes, yet she yearned to work, to be independent. But there were no office jobs for her, and so Alis, too, went to work in Robinson's Christmas Puddings, donning a white overall and turban with the other women, and enjoying their easy acceptance of her. People talked openly, chatted and teased. It was nothing like Rumania. It was, she sighed, better.

Sometimes, as she packed the puddings

into those brightly-coloured boxes, Alis would think of Christmas, and grief would slice into her, almost making her cry aloud. But, as the boxes wobbled down the line, she remembered how the blue flames had lit their tiny, dark flat—transforming it. And then her fingers would fly more deftly as she became accustomed to her duty. Those hands smelt now of food, always food; the fragrance of rose, of lavender would not last, no matter how often she washed.

On autumn evenings Trevor and Alis would walk by the canal, watching golden leaves drift on dirty water, and Trevor told her never to walk there alone. With him, though, Alis felt safe: he was such a huge man that just strolling by his side she felt as enveloped as she did in the king-size double bed with the pale-blue Dralon padded head-



board. It was, she decided, comforting. Sometimes, on the way home, they would buy fish and chips or a Chinese take-away, then eat, watching television, their slippers feet resting on the tiled coffee table. "Are you happy, Mrs B?" he sometimes asked, looking at her hopefully. And Alis would say yes, sometimes with a touch of impatience, because she thought the question absurd. Then Trevor would rise to make a pot of tea, looking thoughtful.

They bought a small fir tree, and Trevor dug the box of decorations from the back of the cupboard. He festooned the flat with glittering chains. Alis had seen nothing like it. She twined a short length of tinsel around the two framed photographs that stood on the mantelpiece—Alis and Trevor on their wedding day, and Alis with her mother and brothers—then stood for a long time, gazing at them, until the heat from the electric fire drove her away.

When the first news came from Rumania she spilt her tea on the rug, oblivious to Trevor's fussing with a cloth, and was silent for long after he had turned off the rest of the programme. "What d'you think then, love? Who'd have thought they'd have stood up to the old bugger at last, eh?" Alis nodded, silent. Even at this distance the thought of people standing in the open, where they could be seen, jeering at Ceauşescu, so that he faltered and stopped speaking . . . it made her stomach dip with horror.

During the next day or two she was avid for news, watching every television bulletin, and even making Trevor go out and buy the quality newspapers so that she could pore over

line-by-line analysis. Trevor said they were too intellectual for him. He just rubbed his hands together and chortled, "Well, I suppose it had to happen. Once the wall went down, and then Czechoslovakia . . . They all want to be like us, and you can't blame 'em, can you, pet?" Alis shook her head, not wanting to talk. Then he, too, fell silent, looking at her with that hopeful, dog-like look she recalled from last summer.

On Christmas morning Alis opened her presents in a trance, stopping at last—with the jacket she had admired in a shop window draped over her knee—and gazing into space. Trevor looked at her, pleasure fading on his face. "They'll be all right, Ally," he said. "Oh, I'm not *worried*," she replied, then seized the Christmas Eve newspaper to see the time of the next news. The new jacket fell on the floor.

In the silence they could hear their small turkey sizzling in the oven. Trevor went to top up the water in the pan containing the Christmas pudding, then called her out to look at the potatoes. His voice was high and false. She walked through crunchy, shiny paper to the kitchen and went through the ritual of making the meal, oblivious to the carols he put on the turntable. "Rumania will be free . . . It's all over, over, over" was the refrain which replaced the alleluias in her mind.

They ate in near silence, heaping their plates with meat, perfectly-cooked carrots and sprouts, and the roast potatoes that were slightly burnt on one side. He made her pull a cracker, and crowned her with a green paper hat, the colour of the solitary stud he still wore in his ear. The little plastic cracker gift fell into her gravy, but still she did not smile.

Then Trevor rose to pull the curtains and banish the unseasonal sun. It was time for the pudding. Alis heard him clattering in the kitchen and waited, her hands folded resolutely on the table before her. "Here y'are then, luv!" he called, kicking open the door and holding the plate high. Blue flames lit his face, shining on that silly, expectant grin, as he put the plate down before her, and she felt the warmth on her face. For a long time she contemplated the flames until they died, leaving just a brown mound in the middle of a cheap plate. When she looked up at him at last her cheeks were wet.

He stared at her, looking small and shrivelled suddenly, like a child who has been told that he will not, after all, play the lead in the school pantomime. "Alis?" he said slowly, "I want to tell you something. I want you to know . . . er . . . Well, now you'll be able to go back, won't you? You'll be wanting . . . I mean, you won't be *needing* . . ." His voice faded helplessly. There was a peculiar twist to his mouth now, and he shrugged.

She looked at him for a long, long time. He knew. She had never guessed that he knew. And as she stared at him it was as if blue flames still danced before his face, miraculous, transforming—as heady as the rich fruit and brandy smell that rose from the plate before her.

Calmly she reached for a spoon to serve the pudding, cutting into its depths without dropping that steady gaze of recognition. "You," she said, "you're daft. *Te iubesc*." □

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ILN CHRISTMAS AT SOUTH LODGE HOTEL IN SUSSEX

Christmas will be celebrated in traditional style at the South Lodge Hotel in rural West Sussex. The Christmas break at this luxurious 4-star country-house hotel set in 93 acres of beautiful parkland, with views over the South Downs, will run from December 24 to December 27, and, for no extra cost, *ILN* readers can enjoy an additional night's stay plus dinner. The extra night may be taken on December 23 or 27.

The hotel's restaurant, in the charge of chef Anthony Tobin, has just been awarded "County Restaurant of the Year 1992" by *The Good Food Guide*.

Plenty of entertainment has been laid on for the holiday, including clay-pigeon shooting, falconry, putting, *pétanque*, the South Lodge Racing Extravaganza, a treasure hunt and a trip to the Palace Theatre in London to see the musical *Les Misérables*.

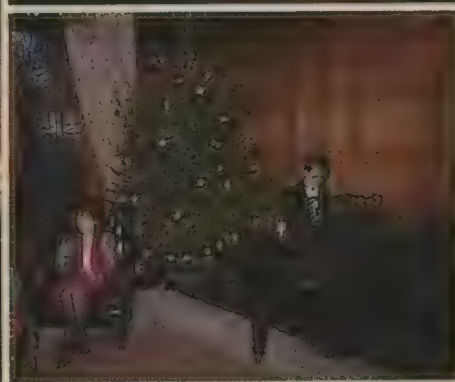
Christmas Eve will start with a champagne reception with hosts David and Cheryl French, followed by a candlelit dinner accompanied by the resident pianist. Guests who so wish may attend Midnight Mass at the local church, with mulled wine and mince pies served on their return.

Christmas Day starts with a leisurely breakfast and a mid-morning rendezvous with Santa for gifts around the tree, before the splendid Christmas lunch. In the evening a traditional Sussex buffet will be served.

Boxing Day can begin with a "sporting" breakfast as a prelude to rural activities and sports. A hearty lunch will be served at mid-day and a light pre-theatre supper before the departure by coach for *Les Misérables*.

The normal Christmas break at the hotel runs for three nights from December 24 at a cost of £575 per person. For the same inclusive price *ILN* readers can stay an extra night, with dinner and full English breakfast the next morning, which can be for the night of either December 23 or December 27. There is no extra charge for a single room.

To ensure a place, fill in and return the form as soon as possible, with cheque or credit card payment for the full amount made payable to The Illustrated London News.



TO: THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS (CHRISTMAS),
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Please reserve me.....place(s) for the *ILN* Christmas Break
at South Lodge Hotel at £575 per person

Please use block capitals

I want the extra night on December 23*/December 27*
I would like a single*/double*/twin-bedded* room
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I enclose a cheque for £575 per person, made payable to
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GOOD QUEEN BESS'S CHRISTMAS LIST

Christmas was a glittering and profitable time for England's most overdressed, avaricious queen, Elizabeth I, writes Geoffrey Warren.

Queen Elizabeth I liked to give and receive Christmas presents. She gave hundreds each year to members of her court, and received hundreds in return. The gifts she gave were impersonal objects such as bowls, flagons and tankards. Those she received were much more varied, and included money, jewellery and clothes—especially handkerchiefs, gloves and petticoats. A record of 1579 listed one of the queen's presents as "By Sir Thomas Cecil, a French gowne of black silke nettwerke, of two sorts, florished with Venis gold, and lyned with white Chamlett."

This would have been presented to the queen on New Year's Day rather than on Christmas Day, which was kept mainly as a religious festival. The Tudor court followed the custom instituted during Henry VI's reign, in 1428, with feasting, dancing and revels throughout the traditional 12 days and the exchanges of presents on New Year's Day. Although there are complete records for only four years of Elizabeth's reign, 1562, 1578, 1579

and 1600, they span most of her years on the throne and provide a fair picture of the royal Christmas lists of that time.

They reveal that the queen gave presents to more than 200 members of her court, from the Lord Chamberlain to all but the lowliest servants. The objects she gave were made of gilt plate, the weight and thus the value of the pieces being determined mainly by the rank of the recipient: a high official or one of the queen's favourites might expect something weighing 100 ounces or more, whereas a humble cutler might get a spoon of no more than 2 ounces. For her part the queen received gifts from 160 members of the court, and, since they were no doubt carefully calculated to please, they provide an intriguing insight into her taste and personality.

The highest in the land usually gave the queen money (she received £8,000 in one year), which perhaps assuaged her avarice, or jewellery, which satisfied her love of extravagance and might take the form of golden, enamelled and jew-

elled collars, brooches, bracelets, buttons and, above all, spectacular pendants, of which she was particularly fond. As might be expected of England's most overdressed queen, clothes, accessories and lengths of material made up the greatest proportion of her gifts: a sumptuous abundance of embroidered velvet, silk and satin, of lawn, lace, leather and fur. There were loose gowns for relaxing in, kirtles, sleeves and partlets, mantles and cloaks, stockings and smocks, coifs and caps, gloves and ruffs.

In one four-year period the queen received 22 petticoats (they were intended to be seen then); one made of embroidered purple velvet with a golden fringe was probably typical. It was the custom to wear separate sleeves, which were pinned or tied to the gown, and in 1562 we learn that she received 10 pairs. Thin and anaemic, she must have suffered in cold and draughty palaces—except for Richmond, her "warm winter box"—so was no doubt grateful for a black velvet muffler embroidered with

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*OSTRICH-FEATHER
FANS, ABOVE, AND FINE
LEATHER GLOVES,
LEFT, WERE TUDOR STATUS
SYMBOLS AND
POPULAR GIFTS FOR THE
QUEEN FROM THE
MEMBERS OF HER COURT.*



MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY

gold thread and pearls, a blue satin muff smothered in gold lace knots, and a pair of embroidered, black velvet mittens. For summer the Baroness of Sandowe gave her a green sarsenet (thin silk) scarf embroidered with pearls and many-coloured silks.

Fine leather gloves were status symbols in Tudor England and more often carried than worn. They were either short with jewelled and braided cuffs or had deep, embroidered and fringed gauntlets; in four years Elizabeth received no fewer than 275 pairs (at that rate she would have amassed about 3,000 during her reign). In the same four years the queen was given 189 handkerchiefs. These would not have been plain, small squares but huge ones made of embroidered cambric, holland, silk or even cloth of gold, all edged with gold or silver lace. Like gloves, a handkerchief denoted high rank and was clutched in one hand. The queen was also fond of fans, so of course she was given many. At the end of her reign they were of the small, folding



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LUTES AND SONG
BOOKS WERE PRESENTS
THAT PANDERED
TO ELIZABETH'S LOVE OF
MUSIC, ABOVE.

LEFT, AS THE
QUEEN'S POWER GREW SO
DID HER DESIRE
FOR SUMPTUOUS CLOTHES,
WELL-FILLED
PURSES AND JEWELLERY.

variety, but early gifts were large and consisted of bunches of ostrich feathers, often dyed, or of coloured straw stuck into jewelled gold handles.

In 1578 the queen's favourite, the Earl of Leicester, gave her a sable, its gilded head set with jewels. She also received lengths of material, casually referred to as "remnants", which were, in fact, bolts of velvet, silk, cloth of gold and silver, cambric and lawn. A bolder and more curious gift was a "flea-fur", intended to attract fleas from the body. The skin of a small animal, it was hung over one shoulder and fastened to the waist by a chain.

Other gifts reflected the queen's tastes in more than just clothing. As a keen huntswoman she must have been pleased with the crossbow given to her in 1579. Courtiers flattered her skill as a musician and her love of music with song books and lutes in velvet cases. Her intellectual interests were met with books, not least Archbishop Parker's *De Antiquitate Britannicae Ecclesiae*, magnificently bound in

embroidered, green velvet, which is now in the British Library. Looking-glasses reflected her vanity, cushions provided comfort, golden tooth- and ear-picks ensured some measure of cleanliness.

The queen had a notoriously sweet tooth, and her courtiers tempted it with pots of preserved ginger, quince pies and boxes of sugared fruits. Every year her master cook made her a marzipan cake representing such things as castle, cathedral and a chess board with pieces. No wonder she had black teeth.

In 1600 Morris Watkins, one of her humblest servants, gave her 18 larks in a cage. Although he was too lowly to be on her Christmas list, the queen, not normally noted for her generosity, was so touched that she ordered him to be given £1 in silver coins—the equivalent of his annual wage.

The only account we have of how the gifts were exchanged was made by the Earl of Huntingdon in King James I's reign, for New Year 1605, but it may be assumed that this was the long-

established form. It was complicated and curious. The earl had to buy an embroidered velvet or silk purse into which he put £20 (a huge sum of money in those days) in gold pieces. At about 8am on New Year's Day he delivered this to the Lord Chamberlain in the Presence Chamber of the palace. He then proceeded to the Jewel House for a ticket, which he took to an office where he exchanged it for 18s 6d (92½p) as a gift for his "pains", and left a 6d (2½p) tip. Returning to the Jewel House he chose a piece of gilt plate weighing 30 ounces and marked it. On going back in the afternoon to collect it he gave 30s (£1.50) to "the gentlemen who delivers it", put 2s (10p) in a box and tipped the porter a further 6d.

Apart from the money in gorgeous purses we do not know whether the queen's presents were wrapped or not. But if not, then every year, by the end of New Year's Day, the Presence Chamber must have presented a dazzling sight to Elizabeth's delighted gaze □

HIGH MOROCCO

In this photographic essay Bruno Barbey of Magnum illustrates the unchanging lives of the Berbers in the Atlas Mountains.





The village of Tabant overlooks the fertile Ait Bou Guemmez valley, preceding pages, an oasis lying more than a mile above sea level.

The women of the Bou Guemmez tribe forage for wood and fodder, opposite, and create highly decorative clothes for themselves, below.



The narrow valley of Ait Bou Guemmez lies 6,000 feet up in the Atlas Mountains, a green oasis nearly 20 miles long in which huddle 27 villages. The nearest sizeable town is Azilal, 100 miles to the east of Marrakesh. Even in summer it takes four or five hours to travel the winding dirt road that clings uneasily to the steep sides of the mountains, with the 13,000-foot peaks of the High Atlas looming upwards to the south. In winter heavy snow makes the road impassable except by donkey or mule.

Morocco is a huge country, about the size of France, whose protectorate it was

for more than 40 years until becoming independent in 1956. Its exact area is unclear; as the south-eastern boundaries run off into the desert the border has always been a matter of dispute. The Atlas Mountains, geological spine of the country, have been home to the Moroccan Berbers for 2,000 years or more. Conquest by, among others, Romans, Arabs and French have left their mark on this proud people but have not eradicated their traditional way of life.

Where the Berbers originally came from is not known, though their colouring suggests some European link. They were originally settled in one area, but



The Berbers, who have lived in Morocco for more than 2,000 years, combine their ancient beliefs with the later Islamic teaching of Arab conquerors. A new bride's introduction to marriage includes the staining of her hands and feet with henna, opposite, for luck. Veiled, she sits in a corner, above, while local women conduct a bread-baking ritual symbolising fertility, to the accompaniment of singing.





The houses are built of mud-bricks, left, or of local stone, with no electricity or running water, often around an inner courtyard, below left, where traditional music may be played to guests. Traders who sell modern goods in the souks take tea in a restaurant, below.



were scattered, many of them taking to a nomadic life, by the Bedouin Arab invasion in the 12th century. Today they can be found in Egypt, Algeria, Libya and Tunisia as well as in Morocco, some remaining nomads, some working as migrant labourers in southern Europe, others settling as farmers. Many of the latter live in Morocco, where they were the first known inhabitants, and they still form more than a third of the total population of some 27 million.

There are three distinctive Berber groups in Morocco—the northern or Rifian people of the coastal region, the Amazigh or central group living in the

Middle Atlas mountains, and the southern or Shleuh people who inhabit the river valleys of the High Atlas and the Sous, the fertile region of the south-west.

Though predominantly Muslim, the Berbers still preserve and speak their own unwritten language and retain their own beliefs. Village communities live by the old customary law, their cultural identity protected by their remoteness. The stone and mud-brick terraced houses perch in clusters on the hillsides, families living as separate units but perhaps sharing a threshing floor, a mosque and a place where the village government, known as the *jemâa*, can meet.

Heavy winter snowfalls make the steep roads to the High Atlas villages impassable to vehicles, and the Ait Bou Guemmez valley is often cut off. The snow must be removed quickly from the wooden roofs of the Berber houses since its weight can cause them to collapse.



Composed of all the males aged 16 and over, the *jemâa* is responsible for major decisions, each village taking full responsibility for its own internal affairs, though it may have some administrative links with neighbouring communities.

The Ait Bou Guemmez valley illustrated in these photographs is isolated from the mainstream of Moroccan life. There are few visitors, apart from the occasional party of hardy mountain trekkers and the traders who hawk goods from city factories among the souks. Tribal associations thus remain strong, the men retaining the warlike characteristics of the Berbers and the women

labouring in homes and fields. The agriculture is primitive—wooden ploughs are still in use—but the valley is fertile and the life, though hard and often lacking such conveniences as running water and electricity, is sociable. Strict customs are observed for marriage ceremonies and similar important events.

□ Land-Rover tours in the High Atlas can be arranged through The Best of Morocco agency in conjunction with Atlas Sahara Tours of Marrakesh. The Ait Bou Guemmez valley is usually inaccessible between November and February. The Best of Morocco, Seend Park, Seend, Wilts SN12 6NZ (0380 828533).



SWEETS OF THE SOUTH

CHEF KEVIN GRAHAM OF THE WINDSOR
COURT HOTEL IN NEW ORLEANS INTRODUCES A SELECTION
OF HIS FAVOURITE MISSISSIPPI
DESSERTS TO BRING THE WARMTH AND
ORIGINALITY OF THE SOUTHERN
USA TO CHRISTMAS MENUS IN COOLER CLIMES.

The River Road follows the course of the Mississippi River from Baton Rouge to New Orleans. It is lined with old sugar-plantation homes and cane fields interspersed with stands of pecan trees; cane sugar and these indigenous nuts together form the basis for so many southern desserts. The ever-popular pecan pie and, as described here, pecan squares are blends of nuts, sugar and eggs baked to a mouth-watering texture. Pralines are a simple confection of pecans, sugar, cream and butter boiled together and then allowed to crystallise.

The cuisine of the southern United States reflects a society that is still solidly based on the land. Fresh, wholesome fare served at large gatherings of family and friends is a mainstay of daily life. Many of the area's great desserts are served not by chefs in restaurants but in home kitchens,

and several of the recipes that follow are based on those used by local ladies such as Ms Myrtle of Reserve, who "infuses sunshine into her cooking".

The cuisine becomes increasingly "international" and sophisticated as you approach New Orleans, a city whose strategic position at the mouth of the Mississippi made it the goal for a series of incomers hoping to put down roots in North America. African, French and Spanish immigrants have all left their imprint on the unique style of cooking that has evolved since the city was first settled in 1717. New Orleans has also benefited from the arrival at its docks of foodstuffs from around the world.

The local Creole cooking is based on traditional French recipes, with a strong dash of Spanish style. The origins of Cajun cookery, another Mississippi favourite, can also be traced back to France, as the original Cajuns were

descendants of itinerant French Huguenots. This spicy rustic fare packs a considerable punch. But despite the European origins of *brûlées*, *beignets* and sorbets, both Creole and Cajun styles of cooking are strongly rooted in the bountiful harvest of the southern states and their neighbouring seas.

Consistently rated one of America's top hotels, the Windsor Court of New Orleans is a regular winner of good-food awards, such as the American Automobile Association's five-diamond rating. Its chef, Kevin Graham, has recently written a book, *Simply Elegant*, published in America by Grove Weidenfeld, in which he shares some of the secrets from his kitchen. Several of the dessert recipes which follow can be found in the book, while others are some of Graham's own favourites. All would bring a dash of southern warmth to enliven a Christmas menu.



HARLEQUIN MASK WITH TRIO OF SORBETS

For the sorbets
1½lb/675g granulated sugar
2¼pt/1.25l water
1lb/450g raspberries
juice of ½ lemon
20 passion fruit
1½lb/675g honeydew melon
1 tsp honey
For the mask
2oz/50g plain flour
4oz/100g icing sugar
pinch of cinnamon
½ tsp vanilla essence
4 egg whites
double cream, if needed
1 tsp cocoa powder
a little vegetable oil

To make the three sorbets, combine sugar and water in a large, heavy saucepan and bring to the boil over a high heat. Cook for two minutes, then remove from heat and allow to stand for an hour until cooled to room temperature.

Purée the raspberries and stir them, with the lemon juice, into one-third of the sugar syrup.

Halve the passion fruit, spoon out seeds and pulp, and purée them. Stir purée into the second third of the sugar syrup.

Halve the melon and remove the seeds, then purée the melon flesh. Add the purée, with the honey, to remaining sugar syrup.

Strain each sorbet mixture and freeze separately either in a freezer (stirring frequently until frozen) or in an ice-cream machine.

To make a stencil for the mask, trace a mask shape, about 7 inches (18cm) long, onto a rectangular piece of cardboard measuring about 11 inches by 7 inches (28cm by 18cm), allowing a 2-inch (5cm) border all round. Cut the shape out, leaving each "eye" attached to the upper edge of the stencil by a thin strip of cardboard.

Sift the flour and icing sugar together into a large bowl. With an electric mixer on low speed,

add the cinnamon and vanilla, then the egg whites, one by one, mixing well to make a paste. Leave the mixture in the bowl for 45 minutes at room temperature. (If the paste is still thick after 45 minutes, thin with a small amount of double cream to a spreading consistency.)

Mix 2 tablespoons of the paste with the cocoa and place in a piping bag with a narrow nozzle. Set aside.

Preheat the oven to 190°C/375°F/gas mark 5.

Cover a baking sheet with baking parchment and grease lightly with vegetable oil. Lay the mask stencil on top of the greased

paper. Using a spatula, spread a thin layer of the plain paste over the mask. Lift up the stencil and repeat to make 12 masks in all, filling in the gap left above the eye holes.

Pipe a thin band of chocolate paste $\frac{1}{2}$ inch (13mm) wide along the edge of each mask. Draw a toothpick through the chocolate band using an up-and-down motion to create a decorative effect suggesting feathers. Place in the preheated oven and bake for 10 minutes, or until the dough begins to turn golden.

Remove from the oven and immediately peel the masks, one at a time, off the paper, and, while still warm, wrap each around a large, round tin lying on its side to give a curved shape. Leave on the tin to cool before handling. The masks can be stored in an airtight container for up to eight hours.

Prop each mask against a tall champagne or cocktail glass filled with one scoop of each of raspberry, passion fruit and melon sorbets. Serve immediately.

BLUEBERRY CRUMBLE

CHEESECAKE

10oz/275g unsalted butter, chilled

10oz/275g granulated sugar
 $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp vanilla essence
salt

6oz/150g plain flour

14oz/400g cream cheese, softened

freshly-squeezed juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon

8 large egg yolks

pinch of baking powder

2 tbsp apricot jam

1lb/450g blueberries, rinsed and dried

Remove 2oz butter from the refrigerator and allow to soften at room temperature.

In a large bowl, cream together the butter, 2 tablespoons sugar, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon vanilla essence and a pinch of salt. When well blended, work in 3oz flour. If more liquid is needed to make a smooth dough, gradually add 2 to 3 teaspoons of iced water. Form into a ball, wrap in plastic film and refrigerate for 20 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 160°C/350°F/gas mark 4.

On a lightly floured surface roll out the dough with a rolling-pin until it is about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch (6mm) thick. Using a 10-inch (25cm) spring-clip cake tin as a guide, trim the dough to make a circle. Transfer the dough circle to an ungreased baking sheet and prick with a fork. Place in the preheated oven and bake for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool.



Melt 6oz butter in a small saucepan over a low heat. In a large bowl beat together the cream cheese and 6oz sugar. When the ingredients are well blended add the lemon juice, a pinch of salt and the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon vanilla essence. Stir in 1 tablespoon flour, then add the egg yolks one at a time, stirring after each addition. Beating constantly with an electric mixer set on low speed, add the melted butter in a slow, steady stream. Set aside.

To make the crumble, combine the remaining 2oz butter and 2oz sugar in a medium-sized bowl. Cut in the remaining 2oz flour and the baking powder to form pea-sized crumbs. Do not overmix.

To assemble, place the baked crust in the bottom of the spring-clip tin. Spread the apricot jam over the crust. Add the blueberries in a layer, followed by the cream cheese mixture. Sprinkle the crumble on top and bake in the oven for about 30 minutes, until the surface is golden brown. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool.

The cheesecake may be served at room temperature or stored, uncovered, in the refrigerator and served chilled.

Serves six to eight.

HARLEQUIN MASK WITH PASSIONFRUIT.

MELON AND RASPBERRY

SORBETS—A

REFRESHING TREAT.

PECAN SQUARES

1lb/450g unsalted butter, softened

8oz/225g icing sugar

1 large egg yolk

2 drops lemon essence

pinch of salt

11oz/325g self-raising flour, sifted

6oz/150g honey

2oz/50g granulated sugar

8oz/225g demerara sugar

10oz/275g pecan pieces

2fl oz/50ml double cream

In a large bowl, cream 8oz butter, the icing sugar, egg yolk, lemon essence and salt using an electric mixer on low speed, until light and fluffy. Keeping the mixer on low speed, add the flour, a third at a time, being careful not to overwork the dough. Gather into a smooth ball, wrap in plastic film and chill for an hour.

Preheat the oven to 160°C/350°F/gas mark 4.

Using your hands or a rolling-pin on a lightly floured work surface flatten the dough into a

rough sheet about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch (3mm) thick. Transfer to a 15 inch by 10 inch (40cm by 25cm) Swiss-roll tin and press into the bottom and sides of the tin. Prick the bottom of the crust with a fork and place in the preheated oven. Bake for about 20 minutes, or until the crust is firm to the touch. Remove from the oven and set aside. Leave the oven at 160°C.

Combine the remaining 8oz butter, the honey and the granulated and brown sugars in a deep saucepan over high heat and bring to the boil. Cook for three minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the pecan pieces and the cream. Immediately spread the hot mixture evenly over the sugar dough. Place in the preheated oven and bake for 20 minutes, or until set.

Allow partially to cool, then cut into $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch (4cm) squares. These may be stored, covered, for up to a week.

Makes six dozen.

CHOCOLATE BREATHLESS

1lb/450g plain chocolate, broken into pieces

4 large eggs, separated

3fl oz/75ml dark rum

15fl oz/450ml double cream

9oz/250g granulated sugar

7 large egg whites

10oz/275g icing sugar

6oz/150g cocoa powder

Place the chocolate in the top half of a double boiler over simmering water until melted. Place the egg yolks in a large bowl, add 2fl oz (50ml) water and the rum and whisk to blend thoroughly. Stir in the melted chocolate.

Whip the cream until it forms stiff peaks.

In a medium-sized bowl beat 4 egg whites until foamy. Add 3oz granulated sugar and continue to beat until the mixture forms stiff peaks. Fold the beaten egg whites into the chocolate mixture, then fold in the whipped cream. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Preheat the oven to 67°C/150°F/gas mark $\frac{1}{4}$.

In a large bowl beat 7 egg whites until foamy. Add the remaining 6oz granulated sugar and continue to beat until the mixture forms stiff peaks. Sift together 8oz icing sugar and the cocoa, then fold gently into the meringue. Spoon mixture into a piping bag fitted with a plain $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch (13mm) nozzle.

Line two baking sheets with baking parchment and pipe 36 2-inch (5cm) discs onto them, about an inch apart. With the rest of the meringue, pipe long strips onto the baking parchment.



Place in the preheated oven, with its door left open an inch, and bake for about 1½ hours or until firm. Remove from the oven and allow to cool. The chocolate meringue can be made a day in advance and stored in an airtight container until needed.

Chop the meringue strips into ½-inch pieces and set aside. Place a meringue disc on a flat surface and top with a layer of chocolate mousse. Add another meringue disc, then more mousse. Complete with a third layer of meringue. Cover the top and sides of the pile with mousse, then sprinkle the chopped meringue pieces on top. Repeat the process with the remaining meringue discs, making 12 servings in all.

Place one meringue pile on each of 12 serving plates and dust the tops lightly with the remaining 2 tablespoons icing sugar. Serve immediately.

PRALINE BRÛLÉE

1½ pt/750ml double cream
8 large egg yolks
6oz/150g granulated sugar
2oz/50g hazelnuts,
ground to a paste
For the traditional
New Orleans pralines
4oz/100g unsalted butter
8fl oz/225ml double cream
1lb/450g granulated sugar
1lb 2oz/500g demerara sugar
1lb/450g pecan nuts, chopped

CHOCOLATE BREATHLESS IS A TEMPTING CONCOCTION OF RICH MOUSSE AND CHOCOLATE MERINGUE.

For the pralines spread sheets of baking parchment over two baking sheets.

Combine the butter, cream and sugars in a heavy saucepan over high heat and bring to the boil. Stir in the pecans. When the mixture returns to the boil, remove from the heat.

Drop the praline mixture from a dessert spoon to make 1½-inch (4cm) circles on the baking parchment. The mixture will crystallise rapidly, so work quickly. Allow to harden at room temperature for six hours.

The pralines may be stored in airtight containers for up to two weeks. Makes approximately 60.

To make the *crèmes brûlées*, heat the cream for about two minutes, until hot but not boiling, in a heavy saucepan over a medium heat. Remove from the heat. In the top half of a double boiler, combine the yolks, 4oz sugar and the hazelnut paste. Place over simmering water and whisk for about four minutes, or until creamy and thick. Add the hot cream and cook, stirring con-

stantly, until the mixture is thick enough to form ribbons. Remove from the heat and cool immediately over cold water before placing in the refrigerator. Chill for at least eight hours.

Just before serving, spoon the well-chilled mixture into four individual ramekins. Sprinkle the remaining sugar on top and place under the preheated grill to caramelize and brown the sugar, taking care to avoid scorching.

Serve immediately, garnished with a praline on top of each.

SOUTHERN COMFORT PARFAIT

For the caramelised pecans

10oz/275g sugar
3fl oz/75ml water
5oz/150g pecan nuts, roughly
chopped
For the chocolate sauce
8fl oz/225ml double cream
2oz/50g granulated sugar
4oz/100g plain chocolate, broken
in pieces
For the parfait
5 large egg yolks
1½ pt/850ml double cream
2oz/50g sugar
3oz/75g honey
4fl oz/100ml Southern Comfort

To prepare the caramelised pecans, combine the sugar and water in a heavy saucepan and bring to the boil over high heat. Boil the sugar solution until golden—about 15 minutes. Add pecans to saucepan and mix well.

Remove from heat and pour immediately onto a baking sheet lightly coated with vegetable oil to prevent the mixture sticking. Allow to cool for about five minutes to room temperature. Chop caramelised pecans into small pieces and set aside.

To make ½ pint (275ml) of chocolate sauce, combine the cream and the sugar in a small, heavy saucepan over high heat and bring to the boil. Remove from heat and add the pieces of chocolate. Stir until the chocolate has melted. Cool to room temperature before serving.

To make the parfait, place egg yolks in a large mixing bowl. In a separate bowl whip cream until stiff and set aside.

Combine the sugar and honey in a deep saucepan over high heat. Bring to the boil for about two minutes, or until it reaches 105°C/221°F. Remove from heat and whisk gradually into the egg yolks. Continue whisking until yolks cool to room temperature. Pour in the Southern Comfort and mix well. Fold in the whipped cream. Gently fold in chopped caramelised pecans.

Line a 4-inch (10cm)-deep

terrine with plastic film and pour in the parfait mixture. Cover mould with plastic film. Freeze for eight hours. To turn out, remove top layer of plastic and dip terrine into hot water for 10 seconds. Invert onto a serving dish. Remove remaining plastic film and cut into approximately ¾-inch (2cm)-thick slices.

Pour a generous amount of chocolate sauce on each dessert plate and place one slice of Southern Comfort parfait on each. Serve immediately.

Serves eight to 12.

STRAWBERRY BEIGNETS WITH BOURBON WHISKEY WHIPPED CREAM

For the strawberry beignets

1½lb/675g strawberries
5oz/150g flour
1 large egg
2 tbsp sugar
½ tsp vanilla essence
6fl oz/175ml pale ale
1½ pt/850ml light vegetable oil
4oz/100g icing sugar
For the bourbon whiskey
whipped cream
16fl oz/450ml double cream
2fl oz/50ml bourbon whiskey
5oz/150g icing sugar

To make the whiskey cream, whip the double cream to soft peaks. Fold in the whiskey and the icing sugar. This may be made an hour in advance, covered and refrigerated.

For the beignets, carefully pick through the strawberries, removing any damaged ones. Wash and dry them gently, but do not remove stems. The strawberries must be completely dry, otherwise the batter will not stick to them.

Sift flour into a bowl and make a well in the centre. Add egg, sugar, vanilla essence and beer. Mix to a smooth batter, cover with a cloth and allow to stand for two hours at room temperature.

Heat oil over high heat in a deep-fat fryer or large, deep saucepan to 190°C/375°F.

Holding each strawberry by the stem, dip it in batter, being careful not to bruise or break the skin. Ease the batter-coated strawberries into the hot oil, cooking no more than six at a time. Fry for about one minute or until golden brown. Drain on paper towel.

Dust berries with sieved icing sugar and serve with the whiskey-flavoured whipped cream.

Serves four to six □



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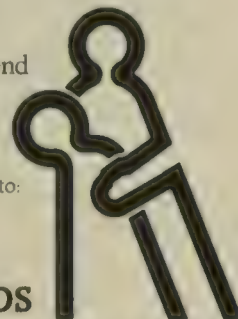
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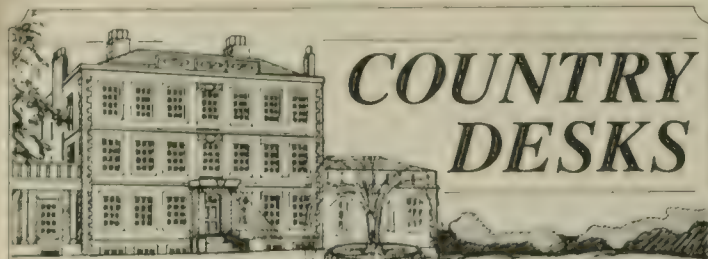
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BRIGHT IDEAS

Christmas gift guide

From a potato-powered clock to a jewel-encrusted wristwatch, here are some suggestions for your shopping list.

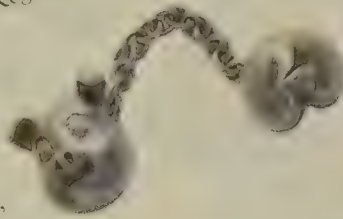
Triptych reliquary pendant depicting the Madonna, Child and angels, engraved gold, Paris, 1380. Price on request. Wartski, 14 Grafton St, W1X 4DE. 071-493 1141.



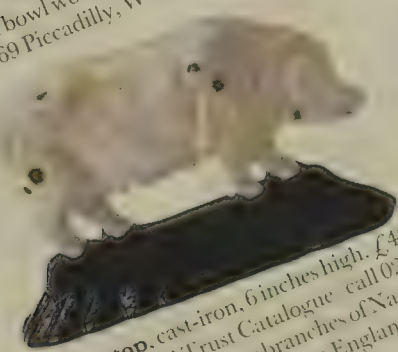
Rainbow rings are flexible friends. Sandwich one of four coloured-enamel bands between two diamond eternity rings. £4,120 for the set from Garrard, 112 Regent St, W1A 2JJ. 071-734 7020.



Pig keyring in sterling silver - unscrew its head to thread your keys on the chain. £55 from Mappin & Webb, 106 Regent St, W1R 6JH. 071-734 5842.



Pig jigsaw - the puzzle's in the piglets. Camel, alligator and goldfish bowl wooden jigsaws also available, from £22, at Senka, 169 Piccadilly, W1V 9DD. 071-495 1515.



Pig doorstop, cast-iron, 6 inches high. £43.50 from the National Trust Catalogue - call 0272 244725 for a copy - or from larger branches of National Trust shops throughout England and Wales.

Kinky candlestick will brighten up any table. Made from cast-iron; also available in green, orange and blue. £29.95 from Liberty, Regent St, W1R 6AH. 071-734 1234.

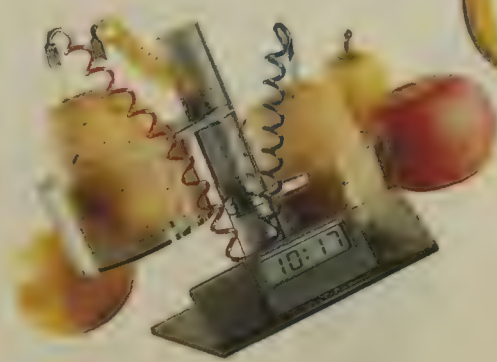


Mata Hari watch by Jean Lassale, with rubies, emeralds, diamonds, and iguana strap. £5,900 from Mappin & Webb at Selfridges, 100 Oxford St, W1A 1AB. 071-629 1234 and Harrods, 87 Brompton Rd, SW1X 7XL. 071-730 1234.

Paillone bracelets by Jean Schlumberger. 18-carat gold with red, yellow, green or blue enamel. £14,700 from Tiffany & Co, 25 Old Bond St, W1X 3AA. 071-409 2790.

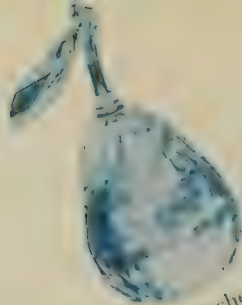


Potato Clock Kit. Build a digital clock powered by potatoes, fruit or plants. £13.95 from the Brainwaves catalogue. Call 051-708 7545 for a copy.





Meerkat family. Bronze statue, 5½ inches high, captures the character of these sociable animals. £32.95 from the Natural History Museum's Catalogue of the Unusual. Call 051-708 7545 for a copy.

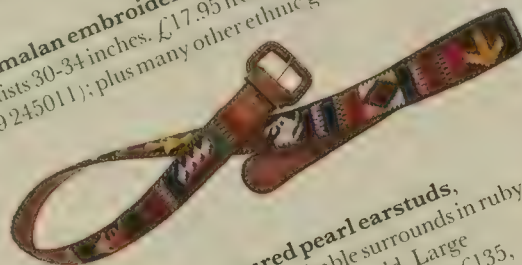


Crystal pear. 3½ inches high, latest addition to Swarovski's Sparkling Fruit series. £89 at major jewellers and department stores.

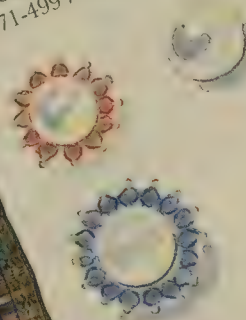
Black soap from Crabtree & Evelyn's new Sienna range for men. £9.50 for a box of three from 6 Kensington Church St, W8 2PD 071-937 9335 and other branches.



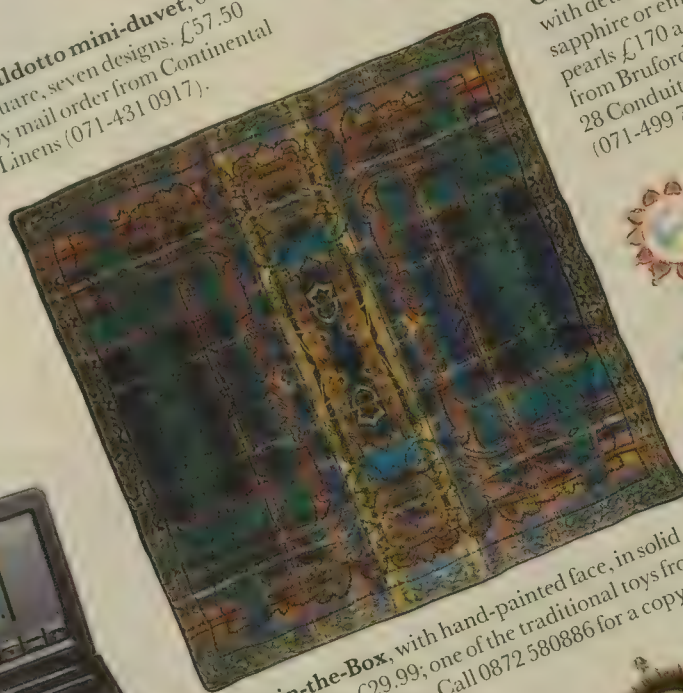
Guatemalan embroidered belt fits waists 30-34 inches. £17.95 from Oxfam catalogue (0869 245011); plus many other ethnic gifts.



Cultured pearl earstuds, with detachable surrounds in ruby, sapphire or emerald. Large pearls £170 a pair, small £135, from Bruford & Heming, 28 Conduit St, W1R 9TA (071-499 7644).



Scaldotto mini-duvet, 60 inches square, seven designs. £57.50 by mail order from Continental Linens (071-431 0917).



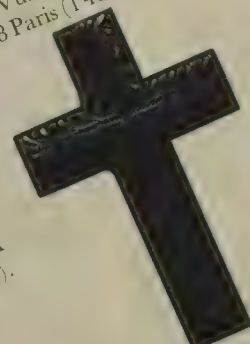
Jack-in-the-Box, with hand-painted face, in solid wooden box. £29.99; one of the traditional toys from the Letterbox catalogue. Call 0872 580886 for a copy.



Porte-bouteilles transports two bottles. Leather, 3,700 francs, Louis Vuitton, 54 ave Montaigne, 75008 Paris (1 40 90 32 00).



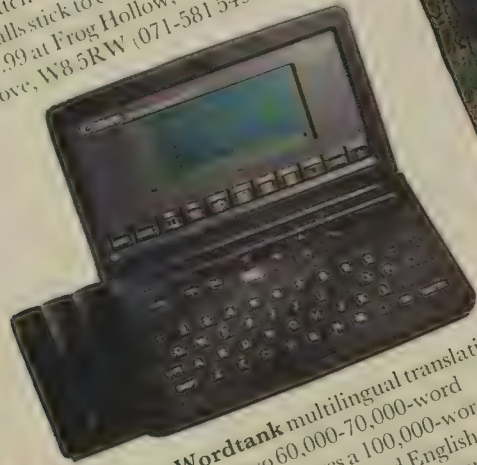
Black crystal crucifix, also available in clear, grey and blue. £76 from a selection at Lalique, 162 New Bond St, W1Y 9PA (071-499 8228).



Astrological tie, silk, £15, from a range of celestial gifts at the Astrology Shop, 78 Neal St, WC2H 9PA (071-497 1001).



Scatch (Super Catch Ball) puts an end to butter-fingers. Balls stick to circular catch board on contact. £11.99 at Frog Hollow, 15 Victoria Grove, W8 5RW (071-581 5493).



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Compiled by
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CHRISTMAS QUIZ



Compiled by Ursula Robertshaw

A What are the derivations of the following phrases:

- 1 To pass the buck
- 2 He is not fit to hold a candle to him
- 3 To turn the tables
- 4 To haul over the coals
- 5 To cut and run
- 6 To eat humble pie
- 7 As sure as eggs is eggs
- 8 To show the white feather

B Allocate the following to their appropriate Gilbert and Sullivan operettas:

- 1 Dame Hannah
- 2 Dr Daly
- 3 Lady Jane
- 4 Phyllis
- 5 Dame Carruthers
- 6 Lady Blanche
- 7 Tarara
- 8 Ruth

C Allocate the following characters to their Shaw plays:

- 1 Mrs Clandon
- 2 Louka
- 3 Frank Gardner
- 4 Proserpine Garnett
- 5 Anthony Anderson
- 6 Rufio
- 7 Charles Lomax
- 8 Sir Ralph Bloomfield Bonington
- 9 Boss Mangan
- 10 Pamphilus

D What are the following?

- 1 assiette anglaise
- 2 cocido
- 3 panade
- 4 tempura
- 5 piroghi
- 6 paupiette
- 7 zakuski
- 8 hen of the woods
- 9 pompano
- 10 jaggery

E From which Victorian paintings by which artists do the details, right, come?

F What position, in fact or fiction, did the following creatures occupy?

- 1 Hodge
- 2 Bull's-eye
- 3 Widdle and Puke
- 4 Geoffrey
- 5 Modestine
- 6 Rosinante
- 7 Tobermory
- 8 Dinah
- 9 Montmorency
- 10 Jip
- 11 Diogenes
- 12 David and Annie
- 13 Bully
- 14 Ginger

G What were the former names of the following countries?

- 1 Mali
- 2 Botswana
- 3 Kiribati
- 4 Lesotho
- 5 Zaïre
- 6 Vanuatu

H What are the more familiar forms of the following place names?

- 1 Kirinyaga
- 2 Dimashq
- 3 Casnewydd
- 4 Al Jazā'ir
- 5 Baile Atha Cliath
- 6 Guangzhou

7 Ağrı Dağı

8 Kérkira

9 Mişr

10 Nihon

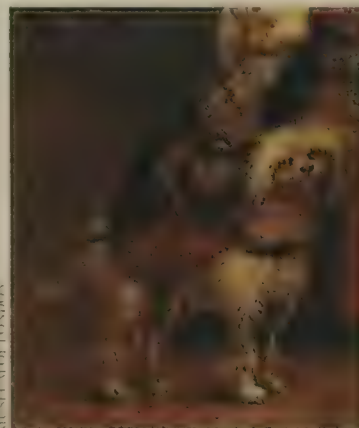
I From what works, by whom, do the following passages come?

1 "I touched the heath: it was dry, and yet warm with the heat of the summer-day. I looked at the sky; it was pure: a kindly star twinkled just above the chasm ridge. The dew fell, but with propitious softness; no breeze whispered. Nature seemed to me benign and good; I thought she loved me, out-cast as I was; and I, who from man could anticipate only mistrust, rejection, insult, clung to her with filial fondness. Tonight, at least, I would be her guest as I was her child: my mother would lodge me without money and without price."

2 "My children, the offspring of temperance, as they were educated without softness, so they were at once well-formed and healthy; my sons hardy and active, my daughters beautiful and blooming. When I stood in the midst of the little circle, which promised to be the supports of my declining age, I could not avoid repeating the famous story of Count Abensberg, who, in Henry

the Second's progress through Germany, while other courtiers came with their treasures, brought his thirty-two children, and presented them to his sovereign as the most valuable offering he had to bestow. In this manner, though I had but six, I considered them as a very valuable present made to my country, and consequently looked upon it as my debtor."

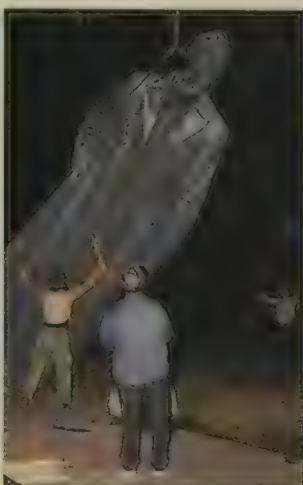
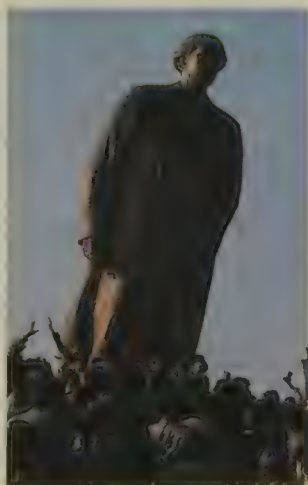
3 "In a minute or two her breathing became more regular, her clasp of his hand relaxed, and she fell asleep. The band of silver paleness along the east horizon made even the distant parts of the Great Plain appear dark and near; and the whole enormous landscape bore that impress of reserve, taciturnity, and hesitation which is usual just before day. The eastward pillars and their architraves stood up blackly against the light, and the great flame-shaped Sun-stone beyond them; and the Stone of Sacrifice midway. Presently the night wind died out, and the quivering little pools in the cup-like hollows of the stones lay still. At the same time something seemed to move on the verge of the dip eastward—a mere dot. It was the head of a man approaching from



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J Name these Communist leaders who fell from grace this year.

the hollow beyond the Sun-stone."

4 "In those days it was true, if ever, that 'man is a wolf to man'. Traveller turned off the road at the sight of traveller, stranger meeting stranger killed for fear of being killed. There were isolated cases of cannibalism. The laws of human civilisation were suspended. The laws which men obeyed were jungle laws; the dreams they dreamed were the prehistoric dreams of cave-dwellers."

5 "It is an old remark, that boys who shine at school do not make the greatest figure when they grow up and come out into the world. The things, in fact, which a boy is set to learn at school, and on which his success depends, are things which do not require the exercise either of the highest or the most useful faculties of the mind. Memory (and that of the lowest kind) is the chief faculty called into play in conning over and repeating lessons by rote in grammar, in languages, in geography, arithmetic, etc., so that he who has the most of this technical memory, with the least turn for other things, which have a stronger and more natural claim upon his childish attention, will

make the most forward school-boy. . . . A lad with a sickly constitution and no very active mind, who can just retain what is pointed out to him, and has neither sagacity to distinguish nor spirit to enjoy for himself, will generally be at the head of his form."

6 "There stood an empty bullock-cart on a little knoll half a mile away, with a young banian tree behind a look-out, as it were, above some new-ploughed levels; and his eyelids, bathed in soft air, grew heavy as he neared it. The ground was good clean dust—no new herbage that, living, is half-way to death already, but the hopeful dust that holds the seeds of all life. He felt it between his toes, patted it with his palms, and joint by joint, sighing luxuriously, laid him down full length along in the shadow of the wooden-pinned cart. And Mother Earth was as faithful as the Sahiba. She breathed through him to restore the poise he had lost lying so long on a cot cut off from her good currents. His head lay powerless upon her breast, and his opened hands surrendered to her strength. The many-rooted tree above him and even the dead man-handled

wood beside, knew what he sought, as he himself did not know. Hour upon hour he lay deeper than sleep."

7 "I have often thought that, as longevity is generally desired, and I believe generally expected, it would be wise to be continually adding to the number of our friends, that the loss of some may be supplied by others. Friendship, 'the wine of life', should like a well-stocked cellar be thus continually renewed; and it is consolatory to think that although we can seldom add what will equal the generous *first-growths* of our youth, yet friendship becomes insensibly old in much less time than is commonly imagined, and not many years are required to make it very mellow and pleasant. *Warmth* will, no doubt, make a considerable difference. Men of affectionate temper and bright fancy will coalesce a great deal sooner than those who are cold and dull."

8 "He was cheered almost from the outset, and yet he knew as he went on that he was failing. He had certain arguments at his fingers' ends,—points with which he was, in truth, so familiar that he need hardly have troubled himself to arrange them for

special use,—and he forgot even these. He found that he was going on with one platitude after another as to the benefit of reform, in a manner which would have shamed him six or even seven years ago at a debating club. He pressed on, fearing that words would fail him altogether if he paused;—but he did in truth speak very much too fast, knocking his words together so that no reporter could properly catch them. But he had nothing to say for the bill except what hundreds had said before, and hundreds would say again. Still he was cheered, and still he went on; and as he became more and more conscious of his failure there grew upon him the idea,—the dangerous hope, that he might still save himself from ignominy by the eloquence of his invective against the police."

9 "I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and intense local attachments as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead nature. The Lighted shops of the Strand and Fleet Street, the innumerable trades, tradesmen and customers, coaches, waggons, playhouses, all the bustle and wickedness round about Covent Garden, the very women of the Town; the Watchmen, drunken scenes, rattles, life awake, if you awake, at all hours of the night, the impossibility of being dull in Fleet Street, the crowds, the very dirt & mud, the Sun shining upon houses and pavements, the print-shops, the old book stalls, parsons cheap'ning books, coffee houses, steams of soups from kitchens, the pantomimes, London itself a pantomime and a masquerade,—all these things work into my mind, and feed me, without a power of satiating me. The wonder of these sights impells me into night-walks



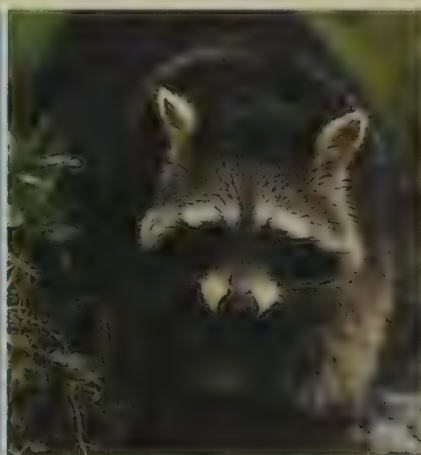


ILLUSTRATION BY ANN WINTERHOUGH

about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fulness of joy at so much Life."

10 "Under the grey heavens, whose drizzle just kept off, the dark concourse gathered to see the show. The 'good old' Queen, full of years and virtue, had emerged from her seclusion for the last time to make a London holiday. . . . Never again would a Queen reign so long, or people have a chance to see so much history buried for their money. A pity the war dragged on, and that the Wreath of Victory could not be laid on her coffin! All else would be there to follow and commemorate soldiers, sailors, foreign princes, half-masted bunting, tolling bells, and above all the surging, great, dark-coated crowd, with perhaps a simple sadness here and there in hearts beneath black clothes put



K Identify the creatures illustrated

on by regulation. After all, more than a Queen was going to her rest, a woman who had braved sorrow, lived well and wisely according to her lights."

L Which are the correct definitions of the following words?

1 inkle

- a) a small measure
- b) a kind of linen tape
- c) a large inkpot or standish

2 dern

- a) a hoe
- b) secret, hidden
- c) left-handed

3 cipollino

- a) a type of Italian sausage
- b) an early stringed instrument
- c) a type of marble

4 tapeti

- a) the Brazilian rabbit
- b) a frame for tapestry
- c) a set of small side-drums

5 tucket

- a) ornamental ruching
- b) a light meal, usually supper
- c) a flourish on a trumpet

6 hoatzin

- a) a raising agent derived from fermented wheat
- b) a South American bird
- c) a chemical reagent which reacts to blood

7 wappend

- a) fatigued, tired
- b) the dregs of beer
- c) insulated by wrapping with string or twine

8 lyssa

- a) an alcoholic concoction made of honey and herbs
- b) free, liberated
- c) rabies

9 boson

- a) an illegitimate male child
- b) a class of subatomic particles
- c) a half-brother

M What are the families of the plants illustrated below (e.g. Dandelion, *Taraxacum officinale*: Compositae)?

1 Blackberry, *Rubus fruticosus*

2 Lady's smock, *Cardamine pratensis*

3 Red clover, *Trifolium pratense*

4 Meadowsweet, *Filipendula ulmaria*

5 Bittersweet, *Solanum dulcamara*

6 Bluebell, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*

N Can you name the following?

1 A shepherd's son, born in 1757, known as the father of civil engineering in Britain, first president of the Institution of Civil Engineers.

2 The British scientist who, in 1897, discovered electrons.

3 The Czechoslovakian monk who propounded a set of rules which governed the way characteristics pass from one generation to another.

4 The Danish scientist who won the first Atoms for Peace Award in 1957.

5 The two scientists, one British, one American, who worked out the double helix shape of DNA.

6 The German geologist who in 1912 propounded the theory of continental drift.

O In which Mozart operas do the following characters appear?

1 Antonio

2 Masetto

3 Electra

4 Bassa Selim

5 Rosina

6 Monostatos

7 Belfiore

8 Alexander the Great

9 Farnace

10 Gomatze

11 Cecilio

12 Annius

Answers on page 87.

ILLUSTRATION BY ANN WINTERHOUGH

A SELECTIVE GUIDE TO SOME OF THE MORE INTERESTING AND ENTERTAINING EVENTS ARRANGED FOR THE COMING MONTHS

FESTIVE SEASON

THEATRE

Alan Bennett's *The Wind in the Willows* makes a welcome return to the Olivier on Nov 7. Robert Lindsay & Derek Jacobi play Henry II & Thomas Becket with tremendous verve in the Jean Anouilh play at the Haymarket. Promising new productions are the RSC's *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde* at the Barbican, opening on Nov 27, & Alan Bennett's *The Madness of George III*, with Nigel Hawthorne, at the Lyttelton from Nov 28.

Addresses & telephone numbers given on the first occasion a theatre's entry appears.

As You Like It. Check by Jowl's all-male version of Shakespeare's comedy. Dec 4-Jan 5. *Lyric Hammer-smith, King St, W6 (081-741 2311)*.

Becket. Jean Anouilh was more playwright than historian, & by ignoring the historical evidence about the characters of Henry II & the man he made Archbishop of Canterbury he created two great & finely-contrasted parts which Robert Lindsay & Derek Jacobi seize with such panache that the play's shortcomings are concealed. *Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1 (071-930 8800)*.

The Bright & Bold Design. New play by Peter Whelan about an Art Deco pottery designer. Bill Alexander directs Clive Russell & Katy Behean. Opens Nov 26. *The Pit, Barbican, EC2 (071-638 8891)*.

Carmen Jones. Simon Callow directs Hammerstein's 1943, all-black version of Bizet's *Carmen*. The alternating casts are headed by Damon Evans & Wilhelmina Fernandez, & Gary Wilmot & Sharon Benson. *Old Vic, Waterloo Rd, SE1 (071-928 7616)*.

The Coup. Quirky political satire by Mustapha Matura which exploits the political unrest in Trinidad. Norman Beaton is excellent as the imprisoned president. William Dudley's set makes good use of the acting area. Until Dec

28. *Cottesloe, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252)*.

Dancing at Lughnasa. Brian Friel's drama, set in 1930s Donegal, about a family on the brink of disintegration. *Phoenix, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (071-867 1044)*.

Five Guys Named Moe. Lively jazz song-&-dance show celebrating the music of Louis Jordan. *Lyric, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (071-494 5045)*.

Hedda Gabler. Deborah Warner's Dublin production of Ibsen's drama, with Fiona Shaw in the title role. Until Nov 16. *Aldwych Theatre, Aldwych, WC2 (071-836 6404)*.

The Hunting of the Snark. Musical by Mike Batt based on Lewis Carroll's nonsense poem. *Prince Edward, Old Compton St, W1 (071-734 8951)*.

The Innocents. William Archibald's play based on Henry James's ghostly novel *The Turn of the Screw*. Dec 9-Jan 25. *Greenwich, Crooms Hill, SE10 (081-858 7755)*.

It's Ralph. Timothy West, Connie Booth & Jack Shepherd in Hugh Whitmore's new comedy. *Comedy, Panton St, SW1 (071-867 1045)*.

Japanese Festival of Plays. *The Angels With Closed Eyes*, about a "happy town" cut off from the pressures of everyday life, Nov 6-9; *Falstaff*, a comedy, based on Shakespeare, performed in 14th-century Kyogen costumes, Nov 12-16. *Mermaid, Puddle Dock, EC4 (071-410 0000)*.

Kvetch. Steven Berkoff leads the cast in his own play about a family of East-Enders. Until Dec 14. *Garrick, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (071-379 6107)*.

Lady Audley's Secret. Melodrama by Sylvia Freedman. Sally Edwards portrays the woman who challenges the fabric of society. Until Nov 30. *Lyric Hammersmith*.

The Last Days of Don Juan. George Anton plays the sexual conqueror in Tirso de Molina's 17th-century tragi-comedy. Until Nov 16. *The Pit, Barbican*.

The Little Clay Cart. Epic fable of romance & revolution, adapted from a Sanskrit text & directed by Jatinder



Derek Jacobi as the Archbishop & Robert Lindsay as Henry II in *Becket*.

Verma. Opens Dec 5. *Cottesloe. The Madness of George III.* Nicholas Hytner directs a new play by Alan Bennett, with Nigel Hawthorne as the king sliding into insanity. Opens Nov 28. *Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252)*.

Much Ado About Nothing. Bill Alexander's well-paced Stratford production, in which Susan Fleetwood endows Beatrice's barbs with a fine wit. Until Jan 4. *Barbican Theatre, Barbican, EC2 (071-638 8891)*.

Murmuring Judges. David Hare's cynical exposé of the British legal system in relation to a bewildered Irish first-offender & a young Antiguan lawyer who takes up his case. Scenes in court, prison, police station, even Covent Garden, are cleverly enmeshed by Bob Crowley's slick projections & the characters are skillfully drawn. *Olivier, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252)*.

Napoli Milionaria. Eduardo de Filippo's play about black-marketeers in wartime Naples. With Ian McKellen & Clare Higgins. Until Nov 16. *Lyttelton, National Theatre*.

Our Town. Alan Alda is the narrator in Thornton Wilder's Pulitzer Prize-winning play about small-town American life. Until Dec 14. *Shaftesbury Theatre, Shaftesbury Ave, WC2 (071-379 5399)*.

Party Time/Mountain Language. A double dose of Harold Pinter: the première of his latest play, *Party Time*, alongside his earlier *Mountain Language*. Cast includes Nicola Pagett, Barry Foster & Dorothy Tutin. Nov 6-Dec 21. *Almeida Theatre, Almeida St, N1 (071-359 4404)*.

The Pretenders. An early play by Ibsen centring on the struggle between two feudal overlords for the throne of 13th-century Norway. Danny Boyle's turbulent production captures the work's relentless violence & the warring contenders are well-contrasted by Paterson Joseph & David Calder. Until Nov 30. *The Pit, Barbican*.

The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui.

Brecht's comic allegory transplants Nazi Germany into Chicago & charts the ascent of Arturo Ui (Hitler) from small-time hoodlum to Führer. Fine performances from Antony Sher & his fellow mobsters, but the play loses direction. *Olivier, National Theatre*.

The Revengers' Comedies. Alan Ayckbourn directs his own play in two parts, performed on alternate nights, of the dark deeds that ensue when a couple of would-be suicides—played by Joanna Lumley & Griff Rhys Jones—decide to exact revenge on each other's behalf. *Strand Theatre, Aldwych, WC2 (071-836 2660)*.

The Ride Down Mt Morgan. Michael Blakemore directs Arthur Miller's new play, the first time a work by the author has been premièred on this side of the Atlantic. With Tom Conti. *Wyndham's, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (071-867 1116)*.

The Seagull. Powerful production by Terry Hands. Michael Frayn's translation provides the strong cast (Susan Fleetwood, Simon Russell Beale & Amanda Root) with opportunity to develop the desperation & tragedy that engulf them. Until Nov 16. *Barbican Theatre*.

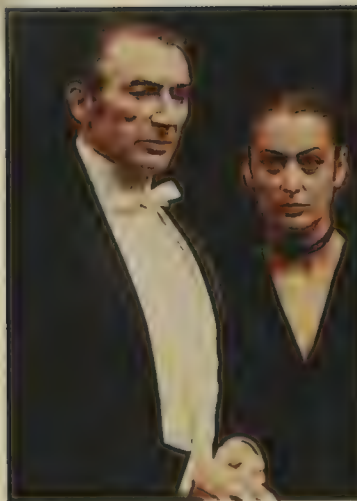
The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde. New stage version by David Edgar of the chiller by Robert Louis Stevenson, with Roger Allam & Simon Russell Beale. Opens Nov 27. *Barbican Theatre*.

A Swell Party. Centenary musical celebration of Cole Porter, with Nickolas Grace as the composer. *Vaudeville, Strand, WC2 (071-836 9987)*.

Tartuffe. Peter Hall directs Molière's comedy, in a new translation by Ranjit Bolt. With Felicity Kendal, Paul Eddington & John Sessions. *Playhouse, Northumberland Ave, WC2 (071-839 4401)*.

Tovarich. Natalia Makarova & Robert Powell head the cast in Jacques Deval's play, seen this summer at Chichester. Until Dec 7. *Piccadilly Theatre, Denman St, W1 (071-867 1118)*.

Troilus & Cressida. Norman Rodway's Pandarus, in blazer, flannels &



John Carlisle & Carol Royle in *A Woman of No Importance*. Samuel Beckett's tramps eternally *Waiting for Godot*. Urban fantasy in *The Fisher King*.

panama hat, never misses an innuendo & infuses a good deal of coarse humour into this bitter saga of the disappointments of love & the disillusion of war, strongly directed by Sam Mendes. Until Jan 4. *The Pit, Barbican*. **Waiting for Godot.** Rik Mayall & Adrian Edmondson spar as Samuel Beckett's tramps. *Queen's, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (071-4945040)*.

When She Danced. Vanessa Redgrave takes the part of Isadora Duncan in Martin Sherman's play about the celebrated dancer. Until Dec 21. *Globe, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (071-4945065)*.

A Woman of No Importance. Oscar Wilde's wit, now almost too familiar, fails to keep the melodrama at bay in Philip Prowse's stylish production. The lines are finely pointed by a strong cast, but the piece seems very dated & the laughs sometimes come in the wrong places. Until Nov 30. *Barbican Theatre*.

RECOMMENDED LONG RUNNERS

Aspects of Love, Prince of Wales (071-839 5972); **Blood Brothers, Albery** (071-867 1115); **Buddy, Victoria Palace** (071-834 1317); **Cats, New London** (071-405 0072); **Me & My Girl, Adelphi** (071-836 7611); **Les Misérables, Palace** (071-434 0909); **Miss Saigon, Theatre Royal, Drury Lane** (071-836 8108); **The Mousetrap, St Martin's** (071-836 1443); **The Phantom of the Opera, Her Majesty's** (071-839 2244); **Return to the Forbidden Planet, Cambridge** (071-379 5299); **Run for Your Wife! Duchess** (071-836 8243); **Starlight Express, Apollo Victoria** (071-828 8665); **The Woman in Black, Fortune** (071-836 2238).

OUT OF TOWN

RSC season at Stratford. At the Royal Shakespeare Theatre: *Henry IV, Part I; Henry IV, Part II*; Adrian Noble directs Robert Stephens as Falstaff, Michael Maloney as Prince Hal & Sylvester le Touzel as Lady Percy, until Jan 25. *Twelfth Night*, directed by Griff Rhys Jones, with Sylvester le

Touzel playing Viola, until Jan 24. *Romeo & Juliet*, with Michael Maloney & Clare Holman, until Jan 23. *Julius Caesar*, with Robert Stephens, until Jan 23. At the Swan Theatre: *The Virtuoso*, Thomas Shadwell's 1676 comedy, with Freddie Jones, until Jan 25. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, David Thacker directs Richard Bonneville as Valentine, Barry Lynch as Proteus & Clare Holman as Julia, until Jan 24. *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, John Ford's best-known play, with Saskia Reeves & Tim McInnerny, until Jan 25. *The Alchemist*, by Ben Jonson, with David Bradley, until Jan 20. *The Thebans*, Sophocles's trilogy in a new translation by Timberlake Wertenbaker, with Gerard Murphy as Oedipus. Nov 2-Jan 23. At The Other Place: *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, by Thomas Heywood. *Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 6BB (0789 295623)*.

CHRISTMAS & CHILDREN'S SHOWS

Beauty & the Beast. The 1841 Planche version of the well-known fairy tale performed in one of London's last remaining music-halls. Dec 11-Feb 9. *Players, Villiers St, WC2 (071-839 1134)*.

Bertie Badger's Christmas Adventure. Play with music for four- to nine-year-olds. Dec 17-Jan 4. *Fortune, Russell St, WC2 (071-836 2238)*.

The BFG. David Wood's adaptation of Roald Dahl's children's book about a giant. Nov 26-Jan 26. *Aldwych Theatre, Aldwych, WC2 (071-836 6404)*.

A Christmas Carol. Musical adaptation of Dickens's novel. Jan 7-Feb 2. *Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (071-278 8916)*.

Cinderella. Sylvester McCoy in the role of Baron Hardup. Dec 12-Jan 25. *Richmond Theatre, Richmond, Surrey (081-940 0088)*.

Cinderella. With Windsor Davies as Baron Hardup. Dec 12-Jan 19. *Ashcroft, Croydon, Surrey (081-688 9291)*.

Cinderella. With Mike Read as Buttons. Dec 26-Jan 18. *Thorndike, Leatherhead, Surrey (0372 377677)*.

Dick Whittington. Rula Lenska in

the title role, with Les Dawson & John Nettles. Dec 19-Feb 2. *Wimbledon Theatre, 93 The Broadway, SW19 (081-540 0362)*.

Dick Whittington. With Pauline Quirke, Peter Duncan & Linda Robson. Dec 13-Jan 4. *Hackney Empire, 291 Mare St, E8 (081-985 2424)*.

Jack & the Beanstalk. Cilla Black as Jack, with Jean Boht & Patrick Mower. Dec 13-Jan 19. *Piccadilly Theatre, Denman St, W1 (071-867 1118)*.

Jack & the Beanstalk. With Ronnie Corbett as Jack. Dec 12-Jan 18. *Churchill, Bromley, Kent (081-400 6677)*.

Joseph & the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. Jason Donovan leads the cast in the Andrew Lloyd-Webber/Tim Rice musical. *Palladium, Argyl St, W1 (071-494 5038)*.

Meg & Mog Show. Adapted from the books by Helen Nicoll & Jan Pienkowski. Nov 16-Jan 26. *Unicorn, Great Newport St, WC2 (071-836 3334)*.

Mother Goose. Traditional panto written & directed by Bill Oddie & Laura Beaumont. Dec 5-Jan 11. *Shaw, 100 Euston Rd, NW1 (071-388 1394)*.

Mother Goose. New version of the popular tale. Dec 2-Jan 18. *Theatre Royal Stratford East, Gerry Raffles Sq, E15 (081-534 0310)*.

Postman Pat's Special Delivery. Jess the cat & other old friends join Pat to entertain pre-school audiences. Dec 10-Jan 5. *Lyric Hammersmith, King St, W6 (081-741 2311)*.

The Snow Queen. Hans Andersen's classic fairy tale adapted for the stage. Nov 21-Jan 4. *Young Vic, The Cut, SE1 (071-928 6363)*.

The Travels of Yoshi & the Tea-Kettle. An adventurous quest, set in Japan, for a rare healing plant. Nov 14-Feb 1. *Polka, 240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, SW19 (081-543 4888)*.

The Wind in the Willows. Welcome return for Alan Bennett's adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's book. Michael Bryant is Badger, with Desmond Barritt as Toad, David Ross as Rat & Adrian Scarborough as Mole. Opens Nov 7. *Olivier, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252)*.

CINEMA

The 35th London Film Festival, Nov 6-21, screens more than 180 films from 35 countries at various venues.

Interesting foreign films include Jacques Rivette's *La Belle Noiseuse*, which won the jury's special prize this year at Cannes, & Marco Ferreri's *House of Smiles* from Italy. Among British films are Mike Newells's *Enchanted April*, with Miranda Richardson, & Mark Peplow's *Afraid of the Dark*, with James Fox & Fanny Ardant.

The following are some of the most interesting films showing in and around London.

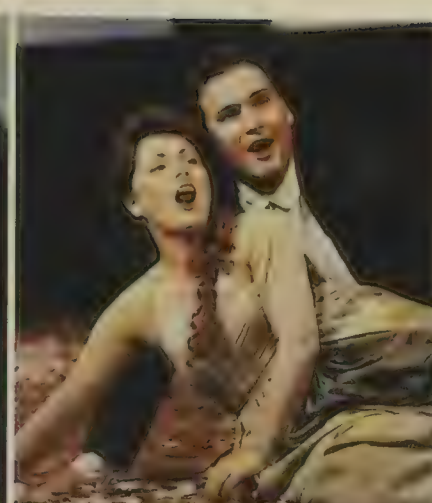
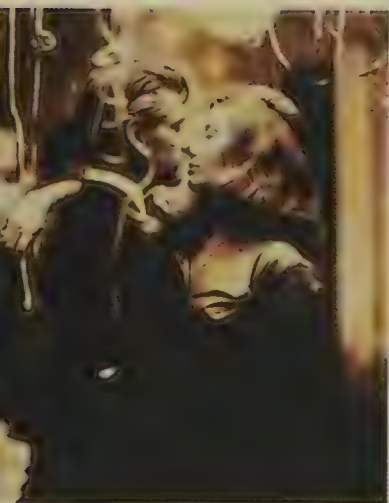
All I Want for Christmas (PG). Comedy, with Leslie Neilson as Santa Claus co-opted by two children to reunite their separated parents in time for Christmas. Opens Nov 29.

Aunt Julia & the Scriptwriter (12). Comedy set in 1950s New Orleans, with Peter Falk as a scriptwriter who uses taped conversations of lovers Julia (Barbara Hershey) and her nephew Martin (Keanu Reeves).

Blonde Fist (15). Frank Clarke makes his directorial debut, directing sister Margi as a working mother who becomes a boxer to solve her financial problems. Opens Nov 1.

City Slickers (12). Corny but enjoyable urban-cowboy comedy, with Billy Crystal, Bruno Kirby & Daniel Stern as three friends who get away from life in the city by signing on for a cattle-drive across the American west. **The Commitments** (15). Alan Parker's raucously entertaining story (based on the book by Roddy Doyle) of a young Dubliner bringing soul music to the city. Good performances from a young ensemble cast.

Dead Again (15). Kenneth Branagh directs himself as a contemporary Californian detective, hypnotised into a 1940s world of intrigue. The unlikely plot is almost completely suspense-free & cannot be salvaged even by



Kenneth Branagh directs & stars in *Dead Again*. Alan Parker brings soul to Dublin in *The Commitments*. Welsh National Opera's handsome *Idomeneo*.

Derek Jacobi & Emma Thompson. **Docteur Petiot** (12). True story of a French medic who murdered 24 people during the Nazi occupation of Paris. Michel Serrault gives a *tour-de-force* performance in the lead role, while Christian de Chalonge's atmospheric direction draws parallels with Nazi crimes against the Jews.

Edward II (18). Derek Jarman's film adaptation of Marlowe's tragedy.

The Fisher King (15). Magical, mystical urban fantasy from Terry Gilliam about a former radio talk show host (Jeff Bridges) & his friendship with the inspiring but mad Robin Williams, a tramp who suffers from bizarre visions. While Gilliam's visual flair is still his outstanding talent, the story has a warmth lacking in previous films. Opens Nov 8.

Frankie & Johnny (15). An adaptation by Terrence McNally of his hit stage production *Frankie & Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, with Al Pacino & Michelle Pfeiffer as two unlikely lovers working in a fast-food restaurant. Directed by Garry Marshall. Opens Dec 6.

Homicide (15). Joe Mantegna as a big-city cop forced to re-examine his Jewish roots in the light of a murder investigation. David Mamet directs.

Jacob's Ladder (18). Sporadically chilling, supernatural thriller from Adrian Lynne, with Tim Robbins as a Vietnam veteran who starts to see demons. The story loses its way, despite excellent special effects.

Julia Has Two Lovers (15). A woman (Daphna Kastner) embarks on an erotic adventure when a telephone call from a stranger highlights the futility of her restrictive relationship. With David Duchovny, Tim Ray & Clare Bancroft.

K2 (15). Matt Craven & Michael Biehn play amateur mountaineers whose relationship is strained while climbing in the Himalayas. Franc Roddam directs. Opens Nov 22.

Let Him Have It (15). Christopher Ecclestone & Paul Reynolds excel as Derek Bentley & Christopher Craig,

jointly accused of killing a policeman. Well-intentioned, but ponderous and over-reliant on pathos.

Mannequin on the Move (PG). Kirsty Swanson is turned by magic into a shop dummy. Only love—in the form of window dresser William Ragsdale—can reverse the spell.

Meeting Venus (12). David Puttnam produces Istvan Szabo's romantic comedy set amid the chaos & amorous intrigue surrounding the staging of a production of *Tannhäuser*.

Nothing But Trouble (12). A group of well-heeled travellers accidentally make a detour in a remote east-coast backwoods town & find themselves at the mercy of a 106-year-old Justice of the Peace. Written, directed by & starring Dan Ackroyd; with Chevy Chase & John Candy.

Other People's Money (15). Wall Street comedy about corporate raiding, with Danny DeVito as a ruthless operator trying to get his claws into family-run New England Wire & Cable Company. With Gregory Peck & Penelope Ann Miller; directed by Norman Jewison. Opens Nov 15.

Proof (15). Jocelyn Moorhouse directs Hugo Weaving as a blind photographer anxious to learn the truth about the images he has captured. Opens Nov 29.

Prospero's Books (15). A textually-faithful version of *The Tempest*, from Peter Greenaway, with John Gielgud as Prospero, Michael Clark as Caliban & Isabelle Pasco as Miranda. Excellent performances from the leads & visually ravishing treatment, but emotionally cold.

Rambling Rose (15). Laura Dern is Rose, whose raw sexual energy is out of place in the repressed American south of the 1950s. With Robert Duvall & Diane Ladd; directed by Martha Coolidge. Opens Nov 1.

The Rescuers Down Under (U). Disney cartoon sequel to the 1977 hit in which mouse special-agents Bernard & Miss Bianca help a boy bring a ruthless poacher to justice.

Shaking the Tree (15). A clichéd

rites-of-passage drama about four male friends (Arye Gross, Gale Hansen, Doug Savant, Steven Wilde) too young to settle down, but too old to behave irresponsibly. Any wit that emerges is suffocated by the plot's predictability. Opens Nov 15.

Shattered (15). Psychological thriller featuring Tom Berenger as a real-estate developer, scarred mentally & physically after a car accident. With Greta Scacchi, Bob Hoskins & Joanne Whalley-Kilmer; written & directed by Wolfgang Petersen. Opens Nov 8.

Spartacus (PG). Kirk Douglas leads the slaves in revolt against their Roman masters in a new print of this 1960 Stanley Kubrick epic with restored footage. With Laurence Olivier & Charles Laughton, & a finescore by Alex North. Opens Nov 1.

Teen Agent (PG). Richard Grieco is an American schoolboy mistaken for a spy when on holiday in Paris. With Linda Hunt & Roger Rees.

Truly, Madly, Deeply (PG). Juliet Stevenson, grieves after the death of her lover (Alan Rickman) until he returns in ghostly form. Superb performances from all.

Under Suspicion (18). Laura San Giacomo & Liam Neeson in Simon Moore's thriller set in 1950s Brighton.

Uranus (15). Claude Berri's controversial thriller is set in a small French town at the end of the Second World War, when rival political factions vie for power. With Gérard Depardieu, Philippe Noiret & Michel Blanc.

Valmont (15). Milos Forman directs Colin Firth & Annette Bening in a film based on the supposed diaries of Choderlos de Laclos's scheming seducer. Opens Nov 22.

What About Bob? (PG). Frank Oz's comic meditation on mental illness with Bill Murray as a "multi-phobic" and Richard Dreyfuss as his beleaguered doctor. Opens Nov 15.

35th London Film Festival. One of the key events in the film year. See introduction p80. Nov 6-21. Information: 071-928 3232.

OPERA

The Mozart bicentenary celebrations reach a climax with *Figaro's Wedding* at English National Opera & *Mitridate, rè di Ponto* at the Royal Opera. Kiri Te Kanawa sings in *Simon Boccanegra* at Covent Garden. *Die Fledermaus* heralds the festive season at the Coliseum.

ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA
London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2
(071-836 3161, cc071-240 5258).

Figaro's Wedding. Bryn Terfel makes his ENO debut in the title role in Graham Vick's new production. Nov 2, 5, 9, 12, 15, 22, 28, 30, Dec 7, 12.

The Mikado. Jonathan Miller's palm court version returns in mint condition with some new gags. Rosemary Joshua is an enchanting Yum-Yum & Anne Collins an imperious Katisha. Nov 6, 8, 13, 16, 21.

A Masked Ball. David Alden's provocative staging with American tenor Richard Taylor as Gustavus, Janice Cairns as Amelia & Malcolm Donnelly as Anckarstroem. Nov 14, 20, 23, 27, 29, Dec 3, 6, 11.

Die Fledermaus. New production by Richard Jones, conducted by Adam Fischer, with Vivian Tierney as Rosalinda, Donald Maxwell as Eisenstein. Dec 2 (royal gala; information: 071-836 0111 ext 468), 5, 13.

ROYAL OPERA
Covent Garden, WC2 (071-240 1066).

Les Huguenots. Meyerbeer's grand opera, last seen here in 1927, directed by John Dew, conducted by David Atherton. Nov 2, 5, 8, 11, 15, 18.

Simon Boccanegra. Georg Solti conducts a new production by Elijah Moshinsky, with Alexandru Agache singing the title role, Kiri Te Kanawa as Amelia. Nov 12, 16, 19, 22, 27, 30.

Mitridate, rè di Ponto. Graham Vick directs the Royal Opera's first production of an opera written by Mozart at the age of 14. Bruce Ford sings the title role, with Ann Murray & Jochen Kowalski as his sons, who



Opera North perform Chabrier's *L'Etoile*. Design by Russell Craig for Glyndebourne Touring Opera's *La Bohème*. London Contemporary Dance in *Rikud*.

are both in love with their father's betrothed queen. Dec 5, 9, 11, 14.

OUT OF TOWN

GLYNDEBOURNE TOURING OPERA

Così fan tutte. Trevor Nunn's stylish production, setting the action on an Edwardian cruise liner.

La Bohème. A fine young cast, led by Anne Dawson & David Maxwell Anderson, bring much conviction & touching intensity to Aidan Lang's sympathetic staging.

Jenufa. Janáček's searing drama in one of the festival's most powerful productions, directed by Nikolaus Lehnhoff. Susan Bullock sings Jenufa, with Susan Bicklev as the Kostelnicka. *Lyceum, Sheffield* (0742 769922); until Nov 2. *Theatre Royal, Plymouth* (0752 267222); Nov 5-9. *Palace, Manchester* (0661-236 9922); Nov 12-16. *Point Theatre, Dublin* (010 353 1 363633); Nov 19-23. *Apollo, Oxford* (0865 244544); Nov 26-30. *Mayflower, Southampton* (0703 229771); Dec 3-7.

OPERA NORTH

Don Giovanni. Robert Hayward sings the title role, with Helen Field as Anna, John Hall as Leporello.

L'Etoile. Chabrier's comedy about the misadventures of King Ouf I, directed by Phyllida Law.

La finta giardiniera. Mozart's early comedy of confusion. *Theatre Royal, Nottingham* (0602 482626). Nov 5-9.

Caritas. World première of Robert Saxton's chamber opera based on a play by Arnold Wesker about a girl who chooses to become an anchoress. *Opera House, Wakefield* (0924 366556). Nov 21, 23, 24.

WELSH NATIONAL OPERA

Idomeneo. Strongly-cast, handsome production by Howard Davies, designed by William Dudley. Dennis O'Neill sings the title role & Rebecca Evans makes a striking début as Ilia.

Die Fledermaus. Rigoletto.

Apollo, Oxford (0865 244544); Nov 5-9. *Mayflower, Southampton* (0703 229771); Nov 12-16. *Hippodrome, Bristol* (0272 299444); Nov 19-23. *Royal, Plymouth* (0752 267222); Nov 26-30.

DANCE

The Royal Ballet presents a new work created for the company by William Tuckett. London Contemporary Dance gives its first season in the capital under the artistic direction of Nancy Duncan. Two facets of Japanese dance, traditional & contemporary, are on show at Sadler's Wells.

Carnival for the Birds. A royal gala in aid of the RSPB with extracts from ballets on the theme of birds, including *Swan Lake* & *Firebird*. Top fashion designers Lacroix, Lagerfeld, Versace & Anthony Price have been commissioned to design costumes. Nov 3. *Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2* (071-240 1066/1911).

Jonathan Burrows/Julyen Hamilton. The work of these two choreographers is represented by *Stoics & Of Solution & Answer & Understanding*. Nov 1-3. *Purcell Room, South Bank Centre, SE1* (071-928 8800).

Karas. Contemporary dance company from Japan, headed by the choreographer Saburo Teshigawara, bring his *Dah Dah Sko Dah Dah*, described as "a mixture of beauty & violence set against intense light & fireworks". Nov 5-9. *Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1* (071-278 8916).

Kikunokai. Japan's leading dance & drum troupe, perform a selection of dance dramas & folk dances, accompanied by traditional musical instruments, such as bamboo flutes, samisen & koto. Nov 10. *Sadler's Wells*. **Laurie Booth & Company.** One of Britain's most exciting dance talents presents *New Text, New Kingdom*, an evocation of the Egyptian Book of the Dead. Nov 1, 2. *Riverside Studios, Crisp Rd, W6* (081-748 3354).

London Contemporary Dance Theatre. Programme 1, devoted to the work of three New York-based choreographers: Arnie Zane's *Freedom of Information*, Nina Wiener's *Wind Devil*, Dan Wagoner's *Flee as a Bird*.

Nov 19-23. Programme 2: Liat Dror & Nir Ben Gal's *Rikud*, Anthony Minghella & Jonathan Lunn's *Hang Up*, Jane Dudley's *Harmonica Breakdown*, Dan Wagoner's *White Heat*. Nov 26-29. Nov 30 (m & e). *Sadler's Wells*. **Northern Ballet Theatre.** Bringing to London Massimo Moricone's new version of Prokofiev's *Romeo & Juliet*, directed by Christopher Gable. Until Nov 9. *Royalty, Portugal St, WC2* (071-494 5090).

Paul Taylor Dance Company. One of the world's most outstanding troupes returns to London with a repertory ranging from pure dance, *Airs & Aureole*, to darker, more dramatic works, such as *Speaking in Tongues*, & including UK premières of *Nightshade*, *Company B*, *Szygy & Fact & Fancy*. Four different programmes. Dec 3-14. *Sadler's Wells*.

Royal Ballet. Quadruple bill: *Les Sylphides*, choreographed by Fokine to music by Chopin; *Afternoon of a Faun*, Jerome Robbins's interpretation of Nijinsky's Greek theme, with music by Debussy; *Thais pas de deux*, choreographed by Ashton; *Winter Dreams*, MacMillan's narrative ballet, based loosely on Chekhov's *Three Sisters*. Nov 4, 7, 14, 28, Dec 2. *Cyrano*, based on Rostand's play, with choreography by David Bintley to music by Wilfred Josephs. Nov 9, 23 (m & e), 29, Dec 4. Quadruple bill: *Agon*, the Balanchine/Stravinsky neo-classical ballet; *Stoics quartet*, with choreography by Jonathan Burrows music by Strauss; new Tuckett ballet; *Symphony in C*, Balanchine's choreography to music by Bizet. Nov 20, 21, 26, Dec 3, 6, 7. *La Fille mal gardée*, Ashton's lighthearted ballet to music by Hérold with Osbert Lancaster designs. Dec 10, 13, 16. *Royal Opera House*. **Trisha Brown Company.** Dance Umbrella celebrates the 21st anniversary of one of America's foremost contemporary dance troupes. Their repertory includes three of Brown's recent works: *Lever Best*, *Astral Concertible & Foray Forest*, also the earlier *Line Up*. Nov 13-16. *Sadler's Wells*.

MUSIC

Mstislav Rostropovich directs a month-long celebration at the Barbican of the centenary of his compatriot Sergei Prokofiev. On Dec 5 the Mozart bicentenary will be marked in concerts at the Festival Hall, the Barbican & in St Paul's cathedral, where a performance of his Requiem is timed to end at the hour of his death in 1791. Concerts of Christmas music provide plenty of opportunities for audiences to join in the singing of carols.

ALBERT HALL

Kensington Gore, SW7 (071-823 9998).

Verdi Requiem, performed by massed choirs of 500 voices & Rosebery Orchestra under Christopher Herrick. Nov 5, 7.30pm.

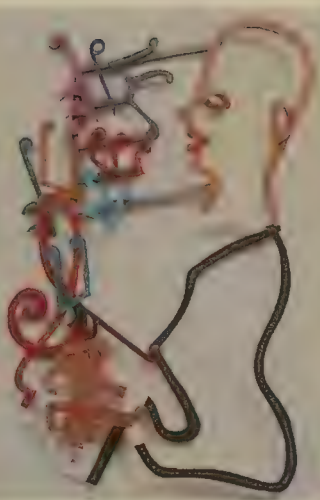
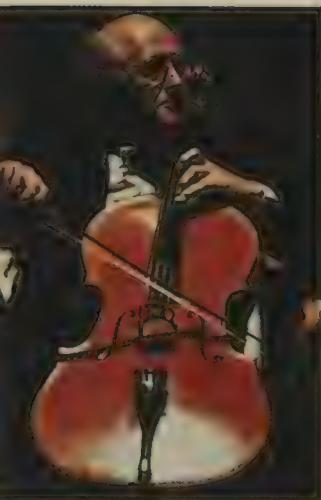
Music for the World. Jane Glover conducts the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London Choral Society & soloists in Beethoven's Symphony No 9 (Choral) & Schubert's Symphony No 8 (Unfinished). Nov 28, 7.30pm.

BARBICAN CENTRE

EC2 (071-638 8891).

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Simon Rattle conducts Turnage's *Momentum*, Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 5, with Alfred Brendel, Henze's Symphony No 7, Nov 1; Edo de Waart conducts *A Short Ride in a Fast Machine* by John Adams, Beethoven's Violin Concerto, with Nigel Kennedy, Strauss's Alpine Symphony, Nov 8; 7.15pm.

Prokofiev Centenary Festival. Mstislav Rostropovich, for some years a close friend of the composer, directs the London Symphony Orchestra in a concert series to mark the centenary of Sergei Prokofiev's birth. He conducts the principal orchestral works & a production of *Betrothal in a Monastery*, performed by the Guildhall School, is the cello soloist in the Sinfonia Concertante & gives the world première of a Cello Sonata written for him in 1952.



Rostropovich celebrates Prokofiev, who is depicted in a sculpture by his son Oleg. Christmas music at the Albert Hall. Jane Glover conducts Mozart at St Paul's.

Others taking part include the Nash Ensemble, Borodin String Quartet, pianists Vladimir Feltsman & Dmitri Alexeev, violinists Itzhak Perlman & Dmiiri Sitkovetsky. The composer's son, Oleg Prokofiev, takes part in an afternoon of discussion & debate on the opening day. Nov 2-Dec 1.

Isaac Stern, violin, **Yefim Bronfman**, piano. Sonatas by Mozart, Brahms, Debussy. Nov 3, 7.30pm.

Mozart 200. The English Chamber Orchestra concludes its series with concerts devoted to Mozart's works composed in the years 1787-91. Programmes include String Quintets & Quartets, played by the Takács Quartet, Symphonies Nos 40 & 41, conducted by Christoph Eschenbach & Mozart's arrangement of Handel's *Messiah*, conducted by Charles Mackerras. Nov 5, 13, 23, 30, Dec 5, 7.45pm.

Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. Maxim Shostakovich conducts Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No 1 & Dvořák's Symphony No 9 (From the New World). Nov 11, 7.45pm.

London Symphony Orchestra. Ion Marin conducts Strauss's *Don Juan*, Wagner's Wesendonck Lieder, with Jessye Norman, soprano, Honegger's *Pacific 231*, Ravel's *Shéhérazade*, Scriabin's *Poème de l'Extase*. Nov 16, 7.45pm.

Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra. Yuri Temirkanov conducts two programmes, including Shostakovich's Symphonies Nos 6 & 10, & works by Mussorgsky, Rachmaninov, & Tchaikovsky. Nov 18, 19, 7.45pm.

London Symphony Orchestra. Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos conducts Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, with Igor Oistrakh, & works by Sibelius & Strauss. Dec 8, 7.30pm.

FESTIVAL HALL

South Bank Centre, SE1 (071-928 8900).

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande. As part of Switzerland's 700th anniversary celebrations, Armin Jordan conducts Martin's Concerto for Seven Wind Instruments, Debussy's *La mer*, Prokofiev's Violin Concerto No 1, with Young Uck Kim, Roussel's suite

No 2 *Bacchus & Ariane*. Nov 1, 7.30pm.

Prokofiev Centenary Festival. Mstislav Rostropovich conducts the London Symphony Orchestra & Chorus in Prokofiev's *Seven*, they are *seven & Ivan the Terrible*, with Tamara Sinyavskaya, mezzo-soprano, Gegam Grigorian, tenor, & Sergei Leiferkus, baritone. Nov 3, 7.30pm.

London Philharmonic. Klaus Tennstedt conducts two performances of Mahler's Symphony No 6. Nov 4, 7, 7.30pm.

Murray Perahia directs the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, from the keyboard, & is the soloist in three Mozart Concertos, K 413, 503, 482. Nov 6, 7.30pm.

Masters of the King's Music. David Willcocks conducts the London Philharmonic in works by Williamson, Bliss, Bax & Elgar. Nov 9, 7.30pm.

BBC Symphony Orchestra & Chorus. David Atherton conducts Elgar's Enigma Variations & Britten's Spring Symphony. Nov 10, 3.15pm.

Remembrance Sunday. London Philharmonic under Michael Kibblewhite, with massed choirs, perform *The Music Makers* by Elgar & Bliss's *Morning Heroes*. Nov 10, 7.30pm.

Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra. Gennadi Rozhdestvensky conducts Shostakovich's Violin Concerto No 1, with Igor Oistrakh, & Sibelius's Symphony No 2. Nov 16, 7.30pm.

London Philharmonic. Kurt Masur conducts Sibelius's Violin Concerto, with Viktoria Mullova, & Shostakovich's Symphony No 5. Nov 26, 7.30pm.

BBC Symphony Orchestra. Mark Wigglesworth conducts Mahler's Symphony No 10, Nov 28; Bartók, Lehar & Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*, with Linda Finnie, mezzo-soprano. Dec 2; 7.30pm.

John Lill, piano, plays Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann. Dec 1, 3.45pm.

Philharmonia. Yevgeny Svetlanov conducts Prokofiev's Piano Concerto

No 2, with Andrei Gavrilov, & Rachmaninov's Symphony No 2, Dec 1; Beethoven's Violin Concerto, with Shlomo Mintz, & Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra*, Dec 3; 7.30pm.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. Adam Fischer conducts Strauss's *Don Juan*, Liszt's Piano Concerto No 2, with Tzimon Barto, & *Totentanz*, Dvořák's Symphony No 9 (New World). Dec 4, 7.30pm.

London Philharmonic, under Bernard Haitink, Emerson Quartet, London Voices & soloists perform works by Mozart on the 200th anniversary of his death, concluding with the Mass in C minor. Dec 5, 6pm.

Philharmonia. Giuseppe Sinopoli conducts Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, with Gil Shaham, & Symphony No 6 (Pathétique). Dec 8, 7.30pm.

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

ECA (Box office: 071-379 4444).

Mozart's Requiem. Jane Glover conducts the London Mozart Players & BBC Singers, with Felicity Lott, soprano, Anne-Marie Owens, mezzo-soprano, Maldwyn Davies, tenor, Richard Van Allan, bass, in a performance scheduled to end around the time of Mozart's death 200 years ago. Readings by Judi Dench & Simon Callow. Performance in aid of Action Research. Dec 4, midnight.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Advent carol services. Dec 1, 6.30pm. *Westminster Abbey, SW1*; *St Paul's Cathedral, EC4*; *St Martin-in-the-Fields, WC2*.

Carol concert. Dec 5, 1.05pm. *St Maryle Bow, Cheapside, EC2*.

Collegium Musicum of London, Vivaldi Concertante. Vivaldi, Albinoni, Handel & carols. Dec 7, 7.30pm. *St John's Smith Sq, SW1* (071-222 1061).

Carol service. Dec 8, 6.30pm. *All Souls, Langham Place, W1*.

L'Enfance du Christ by Berlioz, with Corydon Singers & Orchestra. Dec 8, 7.30pm. *St John's Smith Sq*.

Family Christmas carols. London Choral Society & Concert Orchestra with the Band of the Welsh Guards.

Dec 8, 9, 7.30pm. *Albert Hall, SW7*.

Messiah. Dec 10, 6pm. *St Paul's Cathedral*.

Messiah. Jane Glover conducts Huddersfield Choral Society & Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in Mozart's arrangement. Dec 10, 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*.

Glory of Christmas. London Concert Orchestra play Bach, Schubert, Handel, Bizet, Berlioz & carols for choir & audience. Dec 11, 13, 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Choristers of King's College, Cambridge. Poulenc, Britten, Vaughan Williams & carols for choir & audience. Dec 12, 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*.

Messiah by candlelight. Orchestra of St John's Smith Square, Allegri Singers. Dec 13, 14, 7.30pm. *St John's Smith Sq*.

Carols for choir & audience, with the English Baroque Choir, London Oriana Choir & others. Dec 14, 3pm & 7.30pm. *Albert Hall*.

Hospitals' carol concerts. Massed choirs of London hospitals under Charles Farncombe, with organ & percussion. Dec 14, 3pm & 7.30pm. *Festival Hall*.

James Galway's Christmas collection. City of London Sinfonia, choir & soloists, Mozart, Debussy, Christmas favourites & carols. Dec 14, 5.30pm & 8.15pm. *Barbican Hall*.

Bach Choir family carols, with brass, organ & fanfare trumpets, conducted by David Willcocks. Dec 15, 22, 2.30pm. *Albert Hall*.

Family carols by candlelight. Orchestra of St John's Smith Square, Handel, Vivaldi, Christmas music & carols. Dec 15, 3pm & 7.30pm. *St John's Smith Sq*.

Carol service. Dec 15, 6.30pm. *All Souls, Langham Place*.

Messiah. City of London Sinfonia, Richard Hickox Singers. Dec 16, 7pm. *Barbican Hall*.

Messiah. The Sixteen Choir & Orchestra. Dec 16, 21, 7.30pm. *St John's Smith Sq*.



VCC 1825 Deck the Hall

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FCC 1823 A Christmas Rose

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VCC 1900 Decorations

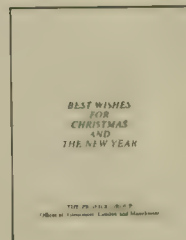
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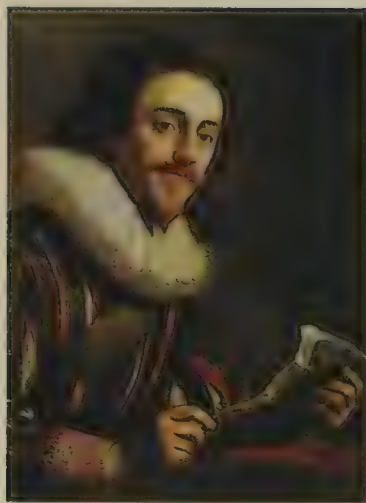
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Charles I by Gerard van Honthorst at the National Portrait Gallery. Hokusai's illustrations at the Royal Academy. Janet Owen's women at Merz.

EXHIBITIONS

Anglo-Saxon art & culture go on show at the British Museum from Nov 8. The Hayward celebrates 80 years of collecting by the Contemporary Art Society from Dec 3. Mexican artifacts associated with the Day of the Dead brighten the Museum of Mankind from Nov 1. Japanese prints by Hokusai open at the Royal Academy on Nov 15.

BANKSIDE GALLERY

48 Hopton St, SE1 (071-928 7521).

MozART. Prints & watercolours celebrating the composer's bicentenary. Nov 13-Dec 1. Tues-Sat 10am-5pm, Tues until 8pm, Sun 1-5pm. £1.50, concessions 75p.

BARBICAN ART GALLERY

Barbican Centre, EC2 (071-638 4141).

Japan & Britain: an aesthetic dialogue 1850-1930. Key developments in the art of both countries. Until Jan 12. Mon-Sat 10am-6.45pm, Tues until 5.45pm, Sun noon-6.45pm. £4, concessions & everybody Thurs after 5pm £2.

BRITISH LIBRARY

British Museum, Great Russell St, WC1 (071-323 7111).

125 Years of Alice. Lewis Carroll's original manuscript *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* & other versions of the two Alice books, together with the original wood engravings of Tenniel's illustrations. Until Jan 5. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2.30-6pm.

BRITISH MUSEUM

Great Russell St, WC1 (071-636 1555).

Collecting the 20th Century. The concept of modernity examined through textiles, craftsmanship & the technical achievements of this century. Until Feb 16.

The Making of England: Anglo-Saxon art & culture from Augustine to Alfred, 600-900. The flowering of art & learning between the introduction of Christianity & the death of Alfred the Great, including

the recently-discovered York helmet & other major finds. Nov 8-Mar 8. £3, concessions £2.

Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2.30-6pm.

BRUTON STREET GALLERY

28 Bruton St, W1 (071-499 9747).

Cities of Europe, Then & Now. Paintings by past & present masters. Nov 6-Dec 31.

Little Gems. Small paintings & drawings for Christmas, from £250. Nov 23-Dec 31.

Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-2pm.

COURTAULD INSTITUTE

Somerset House, Strand, WC2 (071-873 2526).

Master Drawings from the Courtauld Collection. Some of the Institute's most splendid treasures from the 15th to 19th centuries. Until Jan 19. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm. £3, concessions £1.50.

DESIGN MUSEUM

Butlers Wharf, 28 Shad Thames, SE1 (071-403 6933).

Designed in Japan. The emergence of Japan as a major economic power through the country's commitment to the production & promotion of consumer goods. Until Jan 7. Tues-Sun 11.30am-6.30pm. £3, concessions £2.

FRENCH INSTITUTE

17 Queensberry Pl, SW7 (071-589 6211).

Santons de Provence. Michelle André's traditionally hand-crafted nativity characters. Dec 9-19. Mon-Fri 10am-7pm.

FROST & REED

16 Old Bond St, W1 (071-629 2457).

The British Vision 1910-60. Early works of many artists spanning half a century. Nov 6-Dec 24.

Ecole de Rouen. Paintings by a group of turn-of-the-century Normandy artists including Couchaux, Dunet, Frechon, Guilbert, Louvrier, Pinchon & le Trividic. Nov 6-Dec 24. Mon-Fri 9.30am-5.30pm.

MARTYN GREGORY

34 Bury St, SW1 (071-839 3731).

English Watercolours. 18th-, 19th- & 20th-century works by Cozens, de Wint, Ruskin, Millais,

Beatrix Potter & others. Until Nov 22. Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-1pm.

HAYWARD GALLERY

South Bank Centre, SE1 (071-928 3144).

Toulouse-Lautrec. Prints, posters, paintings & drawings of turn-of-the-century Parisian life form the most comprehensive exhibition of the artist's work for 30 years. Until Jan 19. **Shiko Munakata, 1903-75.** First major exhibition in Britain of woodblock prints made by this Japanese artist & admirer of the work of Toulouse-Lautrec. Until Nov 24.

The Contemporary Art Society: 80 Years of Collecting. Paintings by Augustus John, Sickert, Bacon, Spencer & others. Dec 3-Jan 19.

Daily 10am-6pm, Tues, Wed until 8pm. £5, concessions £3.50 (advance booking 071-928 8800, fee 50p per ticket).

SALLY HUNTER

11 Halkin Arcade, Motcomb St, SW1 (071-235 0934).

Drawings & Illustrations by E. H. Shepard. Varied works spanning the long life of Winnie-the-Pooh's image-maker, who was also a soldier, *Punch* cartoonist & illustrator of many other books. Prices start at £200. Dec 4-20. Mon-Fri 10am-6pm.

JPL FINE ARTS

26 Davies St, W1 (071-493 2630).

Pierre Bonnard. Paintings, pastels watercolours & drawings. Until Dec 6. Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm.

KING STREET GALLERIES

17 King St, SW1 (071-930 3993).

The Great War. Paintings, drawings & sculpture by many artists who witnessed the heroism & horror of the First World War. Nov 1-17. Mon-Fri 9.30am-5.30pm, Thurs until 8pm, Sat 10am-4pm, Sun 11am-4pm.

MALL GALLERIES

The Mall, SW1 (071-930 6844).

Royal Society of Marine Artists. Annual exhibition of works on a maritime theme. Until Nov 11.

The Discerning Eye. Small works selected by two critics, two collectors & two artists. Nov 29-Dec 7.

Daily 10am-5pm. £2, concessions £1.

MERZ CONTEMPORARY ART

62 Kenway Rd, SW5 (071-244 6008).

Janet Owen. Colourful portrayals of women by a young artist. Nov 13-Dec 14. Mon-Sat 10am-7pm.

MUSEUM OF LONDON

London Wall, EC2 (071-600 3699).

The Bombing of the House of Commons. Bomb damage forced the Commons to take over the Lords' Chamber. An ARP station & Home Guard unit were set up & a secret munitions factory was created beneath the building. Until Dec 8.

What is it? Identifying the past. How close inspection of objects yields clues to their history. Dec 3-Apr 26.

Tues-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm. £3.

MUSEUM OF MANKIND

Burlington Gdns, W1 (071-636 1555).

The Skeleton at the Feast: the Day of the Dead in Mexico. Vividly coloured sugar skulls & coffins, pottery, skeleton toys, masks & sculptures are witness to the enthusiasm with which Mexicans greet the souls of the departed in early November. Nov 1 until 1993. Mon-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 2.30-6pm.

NATIONAL GALLERY

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (071-839 3321).

Sainsbury Wing:

The Queen's Pictures: Royal Collectors Through the Centuries. A hundred paintings from royal palaces across the country. Until Jan 19. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm. £4, concessions £2. See p13.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

St Martin's Pl, WC2 (071-306 0055).

The Portrait in British Art. Masterpieces from the Elizabethan era to the present day, bought with the help of the National Art Collections Fund. Nov 8-Feb 9.

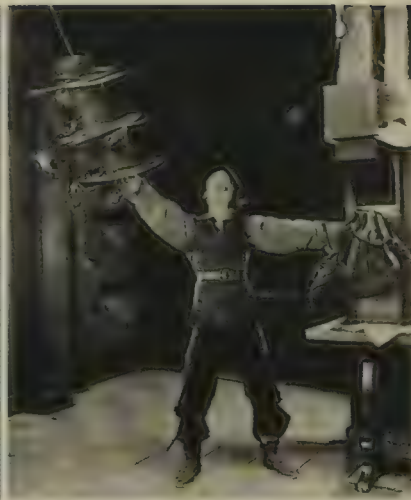
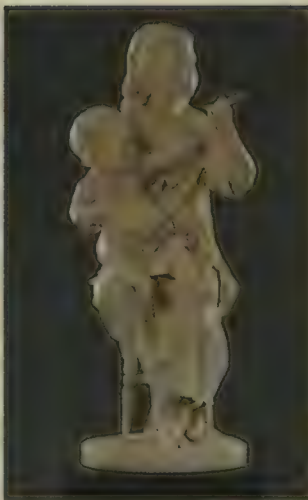
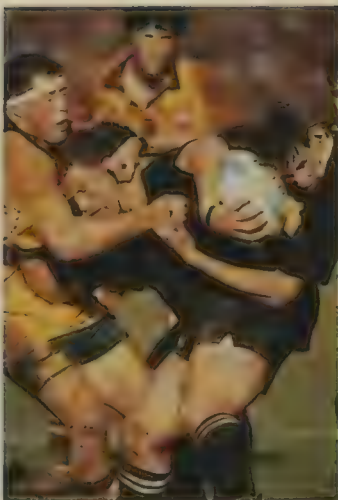
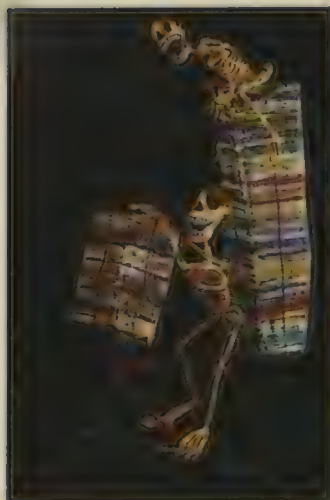
Eve Arnold: In Britain. One-woman show for this American photo-journalist. Nov 22-Feb 23.

Mon-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm.

ROYAL ACADEMY

Piccadilly, W1 (071-439 7438).

Hokusai. Prints, book illustrations & albums by the most celebrated of



The Mexican way of death, Museum of Mankind, Rugby World Cup, Twickenham. Sculpture on sale, Sotheby's. Stunts and swordsmanship at MOMI.

Japanese artists, creator of *The Great Wave* & *Thirty-six views of Mount Fuji*. Nov 15-Feb 9. £4.50, concessions £3. Daily 10am-6pm.

SCIENCE MUSEUM

Exhibition Rd, SW7 (071-9388000).

Making the Difference. The museum's construction of Charles Babbage's Difference Engine No 2, the early-19th-century forerunner of today's computers. Until Dec 31. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 11am-6pm. £3.50, OAPs £2, students, children & unemployed £1.75. Free daily after 4.30pm.

FATE GALLERY

Millbank, SW1 (071-8211313).

1991 Turner Prize Exhibition. Work by the finalists – Ian Davenport, Anish Kapoor, Fiona Rae & Rachel Whiteread. The winner is announced on Nov 26. Nov 6-Dec 8.

Gerhard Richter. Thirty years of paintings by one of Germany's most eminent artists. Until Jan 12. £2, concessions £1.

Anthony Caro. Recent work by the British sculptor. Until Jan 26.

Turner's Rivers of Europe: the Rhine, Meuse & Mosel. Sketches & paintings executed during three tours through the Rhineland & the Ardennes. Until Jan 26.

Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2-5.50pm.

VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

Cromwell Rd, SW7 (071-9388349).

Visions of Japan. Godzilla, karaoke & sushi are some of the oriental flavours brought to this central event of the Japan Festival. Until Jan 5.

The Magi & the Gift: a celebration of Christmas. The symbolism of the kings, the shepherds & their gifts reflected in Old Master paintings. Nov 20-Jan 12.

Fornasetti: designer of dreams. Drawings, graphics, self-portraits & designs for many everyday objects by this prolific Italian artist, who died in 1988. Until Jan 19.

Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm, Sun 2.30-5.30pm. Voluntary donation, suggested £3, concessions 50p.

SPORT

The month starts with the final of the Rugby World Cup at Twickenham on Nov 2. Connors, Cash, Chang & other tennis greats meet in Birmingham, Nov 4-10, for the Diet Pepsi Indoor Challenge. Britain's biggest motor event, the Lombard RAC Rally, gets under way on Nov 24 when drivers will try to wrest the crown from last year's winner, Carlos Sainz of Spain.

GYMNASTICS

USSR Gymnastics & Sports Acrobatics Display. Nov 24, NEC Birmingham; Nov 26, National Sports Centre, Cardiff; Nov 28, 29, Liverpool Sports Centre, Liverpool.

HORSE RACING

Mackeson Gold Cup. Nov 9. Cheltenham, Glos.

Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup. Nov 23. Newbury, Berks.

MOTOR SPORT

RAC London to Brighton Veteran Car Run. Nov 3. Starts 8am Hyde Park Corner, SW1; finishes Madeira Drive, Brighton, E Sussex.

Lombard RAC Rally. Nov 24-27. Starts & finishes Harrogate, N Yorks.

NETBALL

England v West Indies: First Test. Nov 2, Wembley Arena, Middx; Second Test, Nov 6, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear; Third Test, Nov 9, Sheffield, S Yorks.

RUGBY UNION

World Cup Final. Nov 2. Twickenham, Middx.

Oxford v Cambridge (Bowling Bowl). Dec 10. Twickenham.

TENNIS

Volkswagen National Championships. Until Nov 3. Telford, Salop.

Diet Pepsi Indoor Challenge men). Nov 4-10. National Indoor Arena, Birmingham.

Maureen Connolly Trophy (GB v US ladies 21-&-under team event). Dec 6-8. National Sports Centre for Wales, Cardiff.

OTHER EVENTS

Good views for all along the route of the Lord Mayor's Show on Nov 9, the City's most colourful spectacle. The Queen leads the nation in honouring those who gave their lives on the field of battle on Nov 10. The secrets of cinema swordplay are revealed at the Museum of the Moving Image on Nov 6 and of Tudor dancing at the Museum of London on Nov 21.

Cats in Art. Sale of pictures on a feline theme. Dec 2, 2pm. Bonham's, 65-69 Lots Rd, SW10 (071-3517111).

Daily Mail International Ski Show. Enjoy skiing displays & fashion shows, plus the latest information from tour operators. Nov 16-24. Mon-Fri noon-10pm, Sat, Sun 10am-7pm. Earl's Court, SW5. £6, children £3.

Dancing in Early Tudor London. Performance demonstration by Baroque'n'Roll of the measures tripped by Henry VIII & his court. Nov 21, 6pm. Museum of London, London Wall, EC2 (071-600 3699). Tickets £3.50 from the Education Department.

Impacts of Climate Change. Public lecture by Sir Crispin Tickell about ways to mitigate the likely climate changes over the next 30 to 50 years. Nov 12, 1pm. Royal Institution, 21 Albemarle St, W1 (071-409 2992).

International Art History Book Fair. Books, magazines & audio-visual material on antiques, architecture, film, fashion & art. Nov 8, 9. Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-4pm. National Gallery, Orange Stentrance, WC2.

Lord Mayor's Show. A glittering spectacle for dull November as the new Lord Mayor of London, Brian G. Jenkins, is drawn through the streets in a gilded coach, accompanied by floats, bands & merry-making. Nov 9. Leaves Guildhall, EC2, 10.45am, reaching the Law Courts, EC4, at 12.15pm; returns to Mansion House, EC4, about 2.15pm.

The Lost Musicals. Concerts of music from Broadway shows that never became hits. *Do I Hear a Waltz?* (1956), Rodgers & Sondheim, Nov 3, 10; *Love Life* (1948), Kurt Weill, Nov 17, 24, Dec 1, 8, 15; 5pm. Theatre Museum, Russell St, WC2 (071-836 7891). £10.

A Matter of Stories & the Living World. 85th birthday lecture by explorer & conservationist Sir Laurens van der Post. Nov 26, 8pm. Purcell Room, South Bank Centre, SE1 (071-928 8800). £4, concessions £2.50.

Remembrance Day Service & Parade. The Queen, political leaders, Commonwealth high commissioners & representatives of the services lay wreaths on the memorial to the dead of two world wars. Nov 10, 11am. Cenotaph, Whitehall, SW1.

Sales at Sotheby's. Musical instruments including the Schneiderhan Ex-Liebig violin by Antonio Stradivari estimated at £700,000 to £800,000, Nov 7, 10.30am; Postage stamps of Great Britain including a rare 1904 item (£30,000 to £40,000), Nov 21, 2pm; 19th- & 20th-century sculpture, Nov 29, 10.30am. Also, near York, house sale of paintings, furniture, works of art & household items at Castle Howard, Nov 11-13. Sotheby's 34/35 New Bond St, W1 (071-4938080).

Short Stories. Some of the world's finest short-story writers read from their own work, including Edmund White, Alistair MacLeod, Edna O'Brien & Doris Lessing. Nov 8-10, 7.30pm. Purcell Room, South Bank Centre, £3.50, concessions £2.50.

Stunts & swordplay. Learn the secrets of the swashbuckling film heroes from stuntman Derek Ware. Nov 6, 7.30pm. Museum of the Moving Image, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 3535). £3.

Talk by William Tuckett. The Royal Ballet's innovative choreographer on his new ballet which receives its premiere on Nov 20. Nov 11, 7pm. Chorus Room, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (071-8360256). £6.

QUIZ ANSWERS



Quiz questions on page 76.

A

- 1 From the game of poker: the buck, perhaps a piece of buckram or a bucktail, was passed from one player to another as a reminder that the recipient was to be the next dealer
- 2 Alludes to the link boys who held candles outside theatres and other places of amusement at night
- 3 From the old custom of reversing the table or board in games such as chess or draughts, thus changing the opponents' relative positions
- 4 A torture applied to Jews who resisted demands for money, in which they were dragged over the coals of a slow fire—given a roasting
- 5 In the days when a ship's anchor cable was made of hemp, in which they were dragged over the coals of a slow fire—given a roasting
- 6 Refers to the umbles or entrails of a deer, eaten in a pie by the huntsman and his fellows while the lord and his household partook of the venison
- 7 A corruption of the logician's formula "x is x"
- 8 A phrase from cockfighting: a white feather in a gamecock's tail was taken as a sign of degenerate stock, not a true game bird

B

- 1 *Riddigore*
- 2 *The Sorcerer*
- 3 *Patience*
- 4 *Iolanthe*

- 5 *The Yeomen of the Guard*
- 6 *Princess Ida*
- 7 *Utopia, Ltd*
- 8 *The Pirates of Penzance*

C

- 1 *You Never Can Tell*
- 2 *Arms and the Man*
- 3 *Mrs Warren's Profession*
- 4 *Candida*
- 5 *The Devil's Disciple*
- 6 *Caesar and Cleopatra*
- 7 *Major Barbara*
- 8 *The Doctor's Dilemma*
- 9 *Heartbreak House*
- 10 *The Apple Cart*

D

- 1 A plate of cold cooked meats
- 2 A hearty Spanish soup whose ingredients include chicken, meats, sausages, vegetables, potatoes, garlic and seasoning
- 3 A mixture for binding stuffings and dumplings, often of choux pastry or breadcrumbs
- 4 The Japanese style of deep-frying pieces of fish, meat, poultry or vegetables in a light batter
- 5 A Russian pie or patty
- 6 A thin slice of meat, poultry or fish spread with savoury stuffing and rolled
- 7 Russian for hors-d'oeuvre
- 8 A wild mushroom, *Grifola frondosa*
- 9 A species of jack, a fish with sweet white meat, found in warm waters worldwide
- 10 A brown, unrefined lump sugar used in Indian desserts

F

- 1 Dr Johnson's cat
- 2 Bill Sikes's dog (*Oliver Twist*)
- 3 Two of the young Gerald Durrell's dogs
- 4 Christopher Smart's cat
- 5 R. L. Stevenson's mount in *Travels with a Donkey*

- 6 Don Quixote's horse
- 7 The eponymous talking cat in Saki's story
- 8 Alice's cat (*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*)
- 9 The dog that accompanied *Three Men in a Boat*
- 10 Dora Spenslow/Copperfield's dog (*David Copperfield*)
- 11 Florence Dombey's dog (*Dombey and Son*)
- 12 Lovebirds once owned by Prince Charles
- 13 Queen Victoria's pet bullfinch
- 14 Black Beauty's equine friend

G

- 1 French Sudan, joined with Senegal to form the Federation of Mali in 1960
- 2 Bechuanaland, became Republic of Botswana in 1966
- 3 The Gilbert Islands became Republic of Kiribati in 1979
- 4 Basutoland, became Kingdom of Lesotho in 1966
- 5 Belgian Congo, became Republic of Zaïre in 1971
- 6 New Hebrides, became Republic of Vanuatu in 1980

H

- 1 Mount Kenya; 2 Damascus;
- 3 Newport; 4 Algeria; 5 Dublin;
- 6 Canton; 7 Mount Ararat;
- 8 Corfu; 9 Egypt; 10 Japan

I

- 1 *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë
- 2 *The Vicar of Wakefield* by Oliver Goldsmith
- 3 *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy
- 4 *Doctor Zhivago* by Boris Pasternak
- 5 An essay on *The Ignorance of the Learned* by William Hazlitt
- 6 *Kim* by Rudyard Kipling
- 7 *Life of Samuel Johnson* by James Boswell
- 8 *Phineas Finn* by Anthony Trollope

- 9 A letter to William Wordsworth from Charles Lamb
- 10 *The Forsyte Saga* by John Galsworthy

J

- 1 Enver Hoxha
- 2 Felix Dzerzhinsky
- 3 Joseph Stalin
- 4 Lenin

K

- 1 bush-baby; 2 tarsier; 3 marabou;
- 4 racoon; 5 shrew; 6 bandicoot

L

- 1 b); 2 b); 3 c); 4 a); 5 c); 6 b); 7a); 8 c); 9 b)

M

- 1 Rose family, Rosaceae
- 2 Cress family, Cruciferae
- 3 Pea family, Leguminosae
- 4 Rose family, Rosaceae
- 5 Potato family, Solanaceae
- 6 Lily family, Liliaceae

N

- 1 Thomas Telford
- 2 J. J. Thomson
- 3 Gregor Mendel
- 4 Niels Bohr
- 5 Francis Crick & James Watson
- 6 Alfred Wegener

O

- 1 *Le nozze di Figaro*
- 2 *Don Giovanni*
- 3 *Idomeneo*
- 4 *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*
- 5 *La finta semplice*
- 6 *Die Zauberflöte*
- 7 *La finta giardiniera*
- 8 *Il rè pastore*
- 9 *Mitridate, rè di Ponto*
- 10 *Zaide*
- 11 *Lucio Silla*
- 12 *La clemenza di Tito*

E

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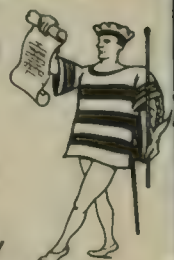
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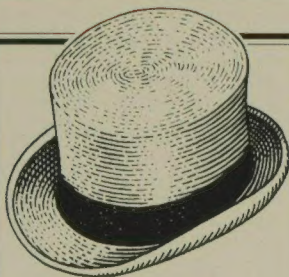
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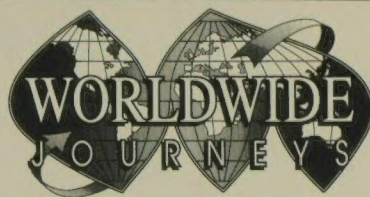
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Indian girl from the Amazon, far left, one of the many fine photographs from *Vanishing Amazon* by Mirella Ricciardi (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £25). Left, wartime departure from *Picture Post Britain*, an evocative pictorial history of Britain from Munich to Suez, with an introduction and captions by Gavin Weightman (Collins & Brown, £16.99). Right, 1899 poster of the nervy, anorexic Jane Avril from *Toulouse-Lautrec: The Complete Posters* by Russell Ash (Pavilion, £16.99).



BOOK CHOICE

Short notes on some suggested books for Christmas reading

HARDBACK NON-FICTION

Darwin

by Adrian Desmond & James Moore
Michael Joseph, £20

Having set out his theory of evolution in secret notebooks at a time when England seemed to be on the verge of revolution, Charles Darwin sat on it for 20 years, declaring, when he finally did reveal his ideas, that it was "like confessing to a murder". This weighty book tackles the enigma of Darwin's life in the light of a wealth of new information, including his massive correspondence, with unwearying verve, explaining how an affable, retiring Shropshire gentleman transformed the thinking of the world.

A Celebration of Gardens

by Roy Strong
HarperCollins, £20

This is a gardener's anthology, the perfect companion for those short days and long nights of winter, when even the most dedicated mulcher and leaf-tidier may legitimately put up his feet and reflect on the literary delights that gardens have inspired, from Pliny to Ted Hughes, from Oscar Wilde to Nancy Mitford, and from many more whose work is less well-known. Roy Strong has dug them all up and replanted them in his own orderly fashion, accompanied by delightful decorations by his wife, Julia Trevelyan Oman.

Queen Victoria

by Giles St Aubyn
Sinclair-Stevenson, £19.95

The reader may wonder whether there is need of another biography of Queen Victoria. There have been many, some of them very good, so it was an act of literary courage to embark on another. In the event Giles St Aubyn has justified his decision: this is a well-written and coherent account of the remarkable woman who came to the throne as a schoolgirl of 18 but whose influence had been established far beyond the shores of her own country by the time of her death.

HARDBACK FICTION

Turning Back the Sun

by Colin Thubron
Heinemann, £13.99

The author's remarkable facility for portraying place is most effectively deployed in this powerful novel set in an imagined "purpose town", peopled by white immigrants whose movement is restricted, on the edge of a wilderness inhabited by seemingly threatening natives. Within this steamy atmosphere Colin Thubron explores the grip of the past on a doctor caught in a conflict of loyalties.

Sins of the Father

by Allan Massie
Hutchinson, £13.99

This intense and powerful novel centres on young lovers embroiled in the consequences of their parents' past. The girl's father was a survivor of Auschwitz, the boy's a former SS officer who is recognised, arrested and brought to trial in Israel. The consequent conflict of loyalties and guilt is skilfully portrayed.

Paradise News

by David Lodge
Secker & Warburg, £14.99

A package tour to Hawaii provides the author with some enjoyable satire at the expense of the modern travel industry, with its evasive and extravagant language and the unfulfilled promise of paradise. To this is added the cost of illness and the teaching of sex to a Catholic priest who has lost his faith—a literary cocktail that never quite blends.

The Kindness of Women

by J. G. Ballard
HarperCollins, £14.99

This is the sequel to *Empire of the Sun*, following the hero of that autobiographical novel out of his boyhood in a Japanese internment camp (though this volume begins some years earlier) into the England of the 1950s and 60s and beyond. There are many absorbing strands, but the book is less well ordered than its predecessor.

PAPERBACK NON-FICTION

Dickens

by Peter Ackroyd
Minerva, £7.99

Powerful portrayal of the life, character and best and worst of times of the great writer, in which Peter Ackroyd deploys his skills as a biographer and novelist to recreate the man and the image he stamped on 19th-century England. If, as Dickens wrote, "trifles make the sum of life", then this is a feast of trifles.

The Invisible Woman

by Claire Tomalin
Penguin, £6.99

The invisible woman is Ellen Ternan, always known as Nelly to Charles Dickens, whose mistress she was from 1857 until his death in 1870. Dickens carefully and elaborately kept her away from his public's view, but Claire Tomalin has brought her from the wings and shows her to have been a woman of character and resilience who established a new life for herself after the great man's death.

You've Had Your Time

by Anthony Burgess
Penguin, £6.99

The second volume of this compelling confessional autobiography begins in 1960, with the author's account of what he had expected to be his last year of life. He had been diagnosed as having an inoperable brain tumour, and resolved to write 10 novels in the year so that his wife would have some means of support. In the event he wrote only 5½, and did not die, which was good news for him and for us.

Alan Moorehead

by Tom Pocock
Pimlico, £8

Alan Moorehead, who came to Britain from Australia in 1935, was a fine war correspondent who subsequently wrote a series of travel books, classics of their kind, until suffering a stroke at the age of 56. A sympathetic biography and a tribute from one journalist to another.

PAPERBACK FICTION

Injury Time

by Beryl Bainbridge
Penguin, £4.99

Beryl Bainbridge's vivid and macabre imagination has conjured up a wonderfully funny, if occasionally bizarre, novel out of the unlikely of situations—a first dinner party given by a man and his occasional lover for an office colleague and his wife in the lover's rather shabby house. Things get rather out of hand at the coffee stage when the party, which is already on the decline, is invaded by a gang of menacing but strangely incompetent crooks on the run from the police.

Symposium

by Muriel Spark
Penguin, £4.99

The story is set at a dinner party in Islington, but the conventional table-talk, switching rapidly from one topic to another, at first hides and then begins to reveal that things are more complex than they seem. Muriel Spark is both entertaining and sinister, and builds the tension with deftness and skill.

Carol

by Patricia Highsmith
Penguin, £5.99

First published in 1952 under the pseudonym of Claire Morgan and with the title *The Prince of Salt*, this is a moving account of a love affair that develops slowly between two women as they travel through America. It is a slight story told with tenderness and humour, and it has a happy ending.

Longshot

by Dick Francis
Pan Books, £4.99

The unlikely hero of Dick Francis's novel is an expert on survival who is struggling to make a living as a writer. Needless to say, he has to draw on all his expertise when he accepts a commission to write the biography of a successful but idiosyncratic National Hunt trainer.



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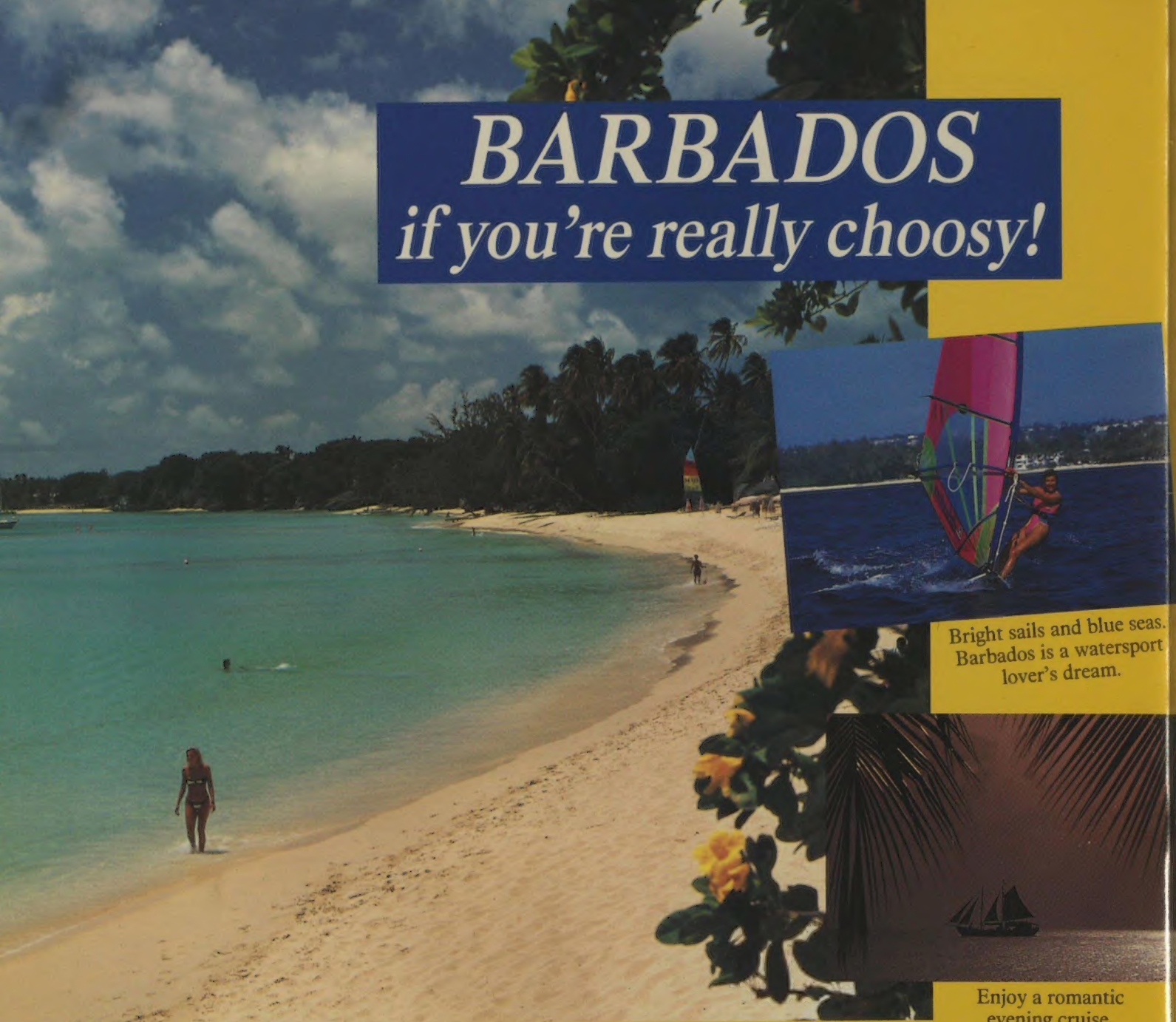


A Day Out of the Ordinary

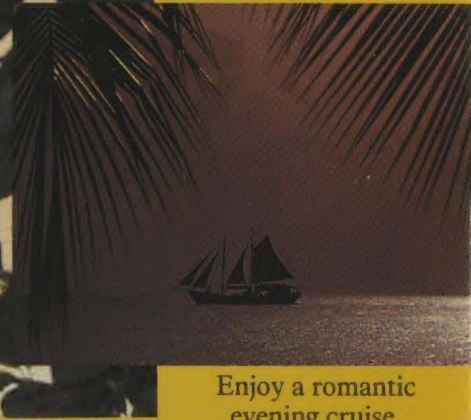
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